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SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S

ROUSING CALL TO HINDU NATION

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CENTENARY PUBLICATION

Compiled By

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

With great pleasure we present this publication to our countrymen. The ensuing Centenary Celebrations of Swamiji's august advent are sure to swell the already enormous literature on him by people of repute and distinction. Still we felt encouraged to have this humble venture of presenting Swamiji's thoughts and teachings in a way concise but clear and complete in itself so far as the limited scope of the subject dealt with was concerned. It is, we think, not just a new and numerical addition to the number of books on him already published but a novel narration in Swamiji's own words of the ideals which he lived, worked and died for.

Flowers are beautiful no doubt, but the beauty of a well-wreathed garland invariably excels the sumtotal beauty of the individual flowers and the credit goes to the expert artist who designs them in an embellishing fashion. Similarly, the distinction of this concise composition of Swamiji's dynamic words owes much to the power of understanding and insight displayed by the compiler Shri Eknath Ranade. It is, obviously, by virtue of his devotional attachment and singular dedication to the ideal of 'Regenerated Bharat' as cherished and preached by Swamiji himself, that he could accomplish this onerous task. His service to the nation through the organisation of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangha right from its formative period with various responsibilities including that of the General Secretaryship, requires no mention to the knowing public.

Today, when the whole country is full with enthusiasm to pay reverential homage to the elevating memory of the great hero, we, on our part deem it a sacred duty to offer our modest bit in the shape of this small book. If it could enthuse the readers, instil the spirit of manliness, service and sacrifice into them and inspire them to fufil the duty they owe to their Motherland, we would feel elated and adequately rewarded for our humble effort.

Calcutta, —PUBLISHER
1st January, 1963

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE TO THE SECOND IMPRESSION

Before the publication was even two months old the reprint of the same became imperative. The ten thousand copies of the first edition fell far short of a multiplying demand for the book from all quarters. What more convincing proof can there be of the general appreciation of our effort! It has undoubtedly encouraged us beyond measure.

This time we have tried to improve upon the quality of paper and printing and lift the general get-up. As the purpose of this 'Centenary Publication' is far from commercial we have stuck to the old low price even accepting its adverse financial implications.

Being encouraged by the public response to our endeavour we propose to publish during this Centenary Year not only the Bengali rendering of the present publication but also handy books on other subjects of lively interest from Swamiji's life and teachings.

Calcutta,
15th March, 1963

—PUBLISHER

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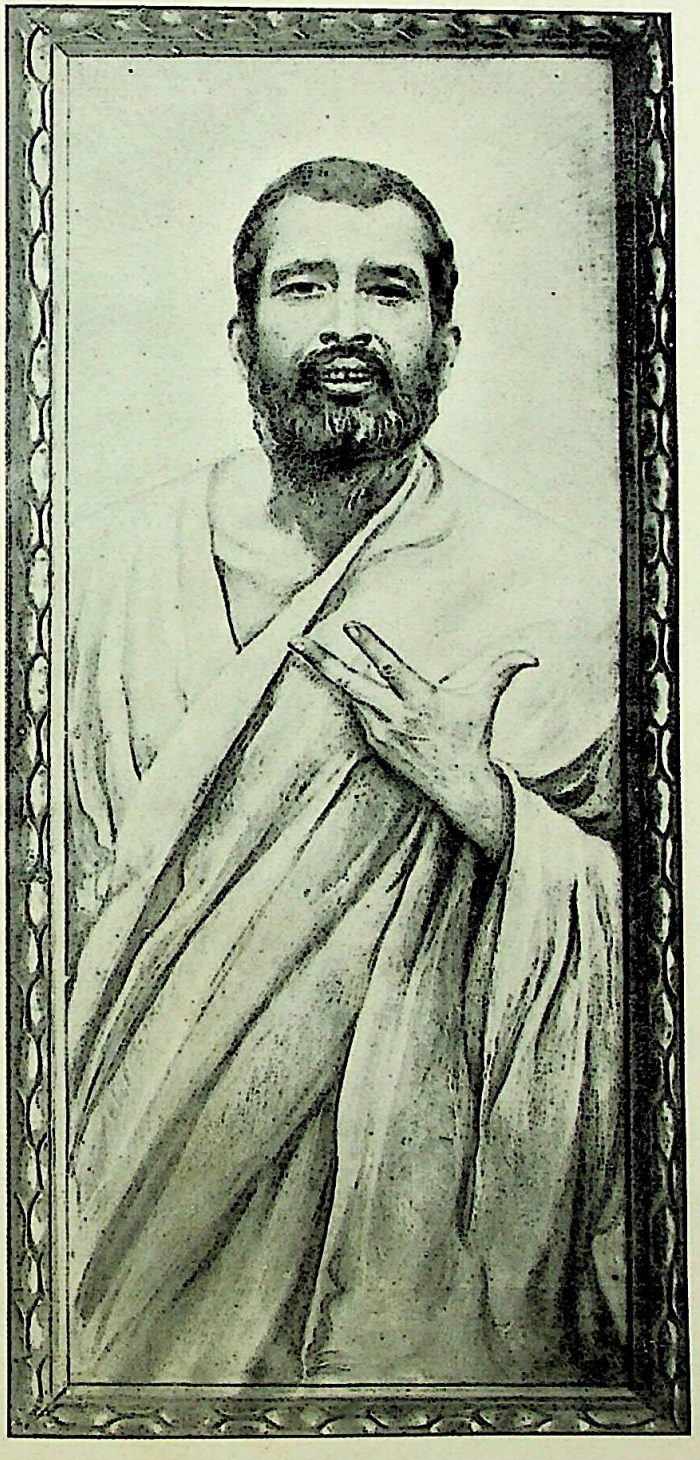

Shri Ramakrishna

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INTRODUCTION

Great preparations are afoot throughout the country for the approaching 'Centenary Celebrations' to commemorate the birth of Swami Vivekananda hundred years ago. Naturally, therefore, a new interest is awakened in re-studying the life and teachings of the great Swami. A great disciple of Sri Ramkrishna Paramhansa, he was, in the recent centuries, the first Hindu missionary who went abroad and re-enunciated to the world the Hindu Message of the Universal Religion (Sanatana Dharma). A great patriot, reformer and organiser, he was also the first to set in motion the forces of national revival and put in process the rebuilding of the country which was scattered and demoralised at the first impact of the British rule. It was he who laid the foundation of the regenerated Bharat by making the country aware of its life-centre which was *religion* round which alone, he emphasized, could our Hindu Nation be effectively and purposefully reorganised.

While the people were getting ready to honour the memory of the great hero and the celebration committees had just started functioning, the nation was violently shaken into a realisation that she was urgently called upon to rally all her might to contain the invading hordes of a ruthless and perfidious enemy from the North. His surreptitious preparations for war and enmity under cover of talk of friendship and negotiations over the inroads made into our territory on the one hand, and, the propensity of our own rulers to live in dream and unreality on the other, took the country by complete surprise when the enemy launched a full scale open invasion across the Himalayas.

This state of affairs of our nation lends a new significance to the message of Swami Vivekananda. For his was the message of strength—the strength of the body, the mind and the will. And this strength in all its aspects is the greatest need of the hour. Swami Vivekananda wanted the nation to have "muscles of iron and nerves of steel inside which dwells a mind of the same material as that of which the thunderbolt is made". He

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wanted his countrymen to possess and to cultivate "strength, manhood, Kshatra-Virya plus Brahma-Teja". These are precisely the things needed in the present hour of crisis and peril, and these are precisely the qualities which have been neglected by us in the post-independence period under the influence of the imported hedonistic philosophies and materialistic views of life.

If we were to sum up Swamiji's teachings, we could say that he gave us one great Mantra : the Mantra of Faith in God, Faith in ourselves. Faith in oneself is based on that great Upanishadic truth which declares : "I am the Spirit. Me the sword cannot cut ; nor any weapon pierce ; nor fire burn ; nor air dry. I am omnipotent ; I am omniscient". This is the Mantra, Swami Vivekananda was constantly dinning into the ears of his countrymen. In whatever he spoke and preached, this Mantra was the refrain of his gospel-song. It is time that we grasped the inner meaning of this Truth and tried to live up to it. If we do that, no power on earth could harm us.

He further declares that in aspiring to attain Moksha, we have to fulfil our Dharma first. In fact, there is no Moksha without Dharma. This is a truth which needed re-emphasis at a time when our religion tended to become life-weary. He rehabilitates a house-holder's life and gives it a new dignity. He reminds his countrymen of their Shastras which declare that only "heroes enjoy the world" and urge them to "show heroism". He asks us to remember that the Shastras enjoin upon us to accept the moral conditions under which we work and have to function. Only by such acceptance of our conditions and environment can we hope to improve them and raise them. Therefore Swami Vivekananda exhorts his countrymen not to forget the Shastric injunction : "Apply according to circumstances the fourfold political maxims of conciliation, bribery, sowing dissensions and open war to conquer your adversaries and enjoy the world—then you will be Dharmika. Otherwise you live a disgraceful life if you pocket your insults, when you are kicked and trodden down by any one who takes it into his head to do so ; your life is a veritable hell here and so your life hereafter.

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This is a message of great value and efficacy for the purpose of steeling our nerves and strengthening our resolve at this critical hour of our history when the nation is called upon to take up arms in defence of its freedom and its way of life, its destiny and its Swadharma.

Time and again he preached that "the national union in India must be a gathering up of its scattered spiritual forces". He thought that "a nation in India must be a union of those whose hearts beat to the same spiritual tune". This message demands our most careful attention, particularly at this present hour when the nation needs all the unity and quick mobilisation of her forces.

Swamiji has one more message to give to the Hindu nation. He asks us to give up our 'Tamas'. For 'Tamas' gives birth to all the evils such as imbecility, superstition, pettiness of mind, mutual quarrels and bickerings about trivial things. Giving up these evils, we should build up great power on the rock of unity and organisation. And thus by co-ordinating our separate wills we should build up a future far more glorious than our past. This message of Swamiji too is timely. For only under a peril like the one we are facing at present, do nations take to stock-taking and self-searching.

It was to fulfil this need of the hour that this publication was attempted.

Swamiji's writings and utterances cover varied subjects like philosophy, religion, sociology and even art, architecture and music. Thus the subjects belong to both the secular as well as the spiritual realms. But in view of the limited purpose of the present publication, only those portions which deal with the glories of our past, and analyse the cause of our degradation in the present and which inspire and prepare us for a bright future, have been chosen. The portions thus chosen have been re-arranged to form a new coherent whole. Evidently, only such passages have been chosen which were of universal character and therefore would not lose their meaning by being taken out of their original setting.

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The publication was intended to be only a compilation. The idea was to present Swamiji's message in his own words without any attempt at interpretation or commentary. Therefore, everything is presented in Swamiji's own words. Only the titles, subtitles, and arrangement of the material belong to the compiler. In certain places nouns have been substituted for pronouns in the interest of clarity. The material for the present volume has been taken from authentic publications like the volumes of "The complete works of Swami Vivekananda", "Life of Swami Vivekananda—by His Eastern and Western Disciples" both published by the 'Advaita Ashrama', old issues of the 'Prabuddha Bharat' 'Brahmavadin' and 'Udbodhan' started during Swamiji's life-time and other contemporary journals.

Therefore, it would be clear to the reader why individual passages have not been put within quotation marks. For in a sense the whole of this volume is within quotation marks.

This book is divided into four parts with different captions indicating their respective contents. These are ; (1) The Message. (2) Selections from Addresses, Discourses and Writings. (3) Some Observations and Admonitions and (3) Man-Making or Moulding of 'Workers'.

(1) *The Message* :—This part forms the main body of Swamiji's thoughts on the state of our nation, a sort of a 'THESIS' advanced by him and which, as has been mentioned above, is carved out of his innumerable addresses, talks, letters and articles. Though only a combination of pieces culled together from various sources, it is composed in the fashion of a mosaic-designing so that it presents, as it were, one unbroken flow of Swamiji's thoughts.

(2) *Selections from Addresses, Discourses and Writings* :— These selections are included with a veiw to make known to the readers Swamiji's thoughts on certain important points which have a bearing on his 'Message' but could not be fitted into the first part or which were only casually touched there.

(3) *Some Observations and Admonitions* :—These few pieces have been selected for helping the readers to get some vivid

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glimpses of the throbbings of Swamiji's heart and the working of his mind. This selection should enable the readers to form a clearer idea of the great fervour and emotion which moved Swamiji from behind his cool and calculated approach.

(4) *Man-Making or Moulding of 'Workers'* :—In all the writings and utterances of Swamiji he referred often to a particular frame of mind as well as to certain qualities of mind and heart required of workers or 'Karyakartas' willing to participate in the nation-building activity.

All such instructive references have been arranged under different heads namely (1) Organisation, (2) Leadership, (3) True Teachership and (4) Secret of Successful Life or The Science and Art of 'Work'. As the subject concerns the operative part of Swamiji's Message it has been incorporated into the book.

Though the choice of the material was limited by the restricted number of subjects chosen, there was plenty of valuable material available under each subject. The compiler had to face a tough problem in overcoming the temptation of including all such material. For had all this valuable material been included, it would have increased the cost of the book beyond the reach of many of our readers. But the compiler and the publisher both wanted the book to be priced as low as possible so that the largest possible number of people could benefit by the thoughts and words of Swamiji. It is, however, hoped that this publication will kindle the desire among the readers to make a fuller study of Swamiji's teachings and many of them would naturally be prompted to go through 'The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda' published by 'Advaita Ashrama'.

—EKNATH RANADE

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PART I

THE MESSAGE.

●

PART II

SELECTIONS FROM ADDRESSES, DISCOURSES AND WRITINGS.

●

PART III

SOME OBSERVATIONS AND ADMONITIONS.

●

PART IV

'MAN-MAKING' OR MOULDING OF 'WORKERS'

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PART ONE

THE MESSAGE

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Swami Vivekananda

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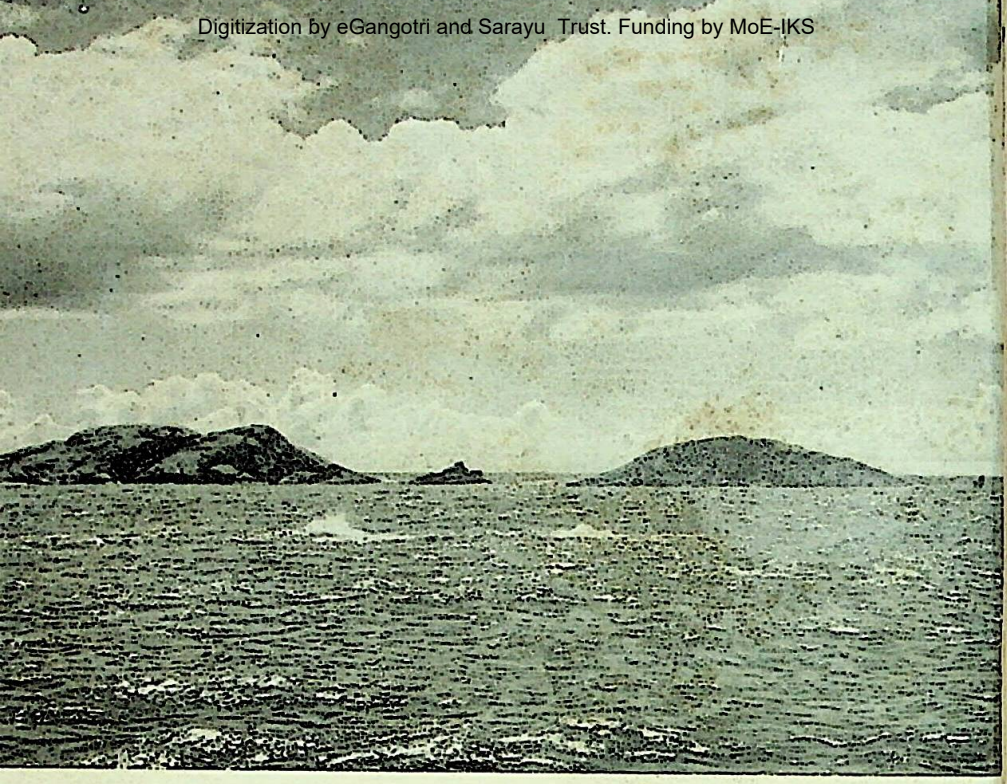

Vivekananda Rocks—Kanya Kumari

"At Cape Comorin, sitting in Mother Kumari's temple, sitting on the last bit of Indian rock, I hit upon a plan."—*Swamiji.*

"Reaching the shrine he fell prostrate in ecstasy before Her image. Worship finished, he crossed to a rock which was separate from the mainland. About him the ocean tossed and stormed, but in his mind there was even a greater tempest.

> And there, sitting on the last stone of India, he passed into a deep meditation upon the present and future of his country. He sought for the root of her downfall, and with the vision of a seer he understood why India had been thrown from the pinnacle of glory to the depths of degradation.

The simple monk was transformed into a great reformer, a great organiser and a great master-builder of the nation."—*Life of Swami Vivekananda by His Eastern and Western Disciples.*

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THE MESSAGE

Mark me,

Then and then alone you are a Hindu **when the very name sends through you a galvanic shock of strength.**

Then and then alone you are a Hindu **when every man who bears the name, from any country, speaking our language or any other language, becomes at once the nearest and the dearest to you.**

Then and then alone you are a Hindu **when the distress of any one bearing that name comes to your heart and makes you feel as if your own son were in distress.**

Then and then alone you are a Hindu **when you will be ready to bear everything for them, like..... the great Guru Govind Singh. After having shed his own blood for the defence of the Hindu Religion, after having seen his children killed on the battlefield—Ay, this example of the great Guru, left even by those for whose sake he was shedding his blood and the blood of his own nearest and dearest—he, the wounded lion, retired from the field calmly to die in the South but not a word of curse escaped his lips against those who had ungratefully forsaken him !**

Mark me,

Every one of you will have to be a Govind Singh, **If you want to do good to your country. You may see thousands of defects in your countrymen, but mark their Hindu blood. They are the first gods you will have to worship, even if they do everything to hurt you ; even if everyone of them sends out a curse to you, you send out to them words of love. If they drive you out, retire to die in silence like that mighty lion, Govind Singh. Such a man is worthy of the name of Hindu ; such an ideal ought to be before us always.**

All our hatchets let us bury ; send out this grand current of love all round.

* * *

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OUR PUNYA-BHUMI AND ITS GLORIOUS PAST

If there is any land on this earth that can lay claim to be the blessed Punya-Bhumi, to be the land to which souls on this earth must come to account for Karma, the land to which every soul that is wending its way Godward must come to attain its last home, the land where humanity has attained its highest towards gentleness, towards generosity, towards purity, towards calmness, above all, the land of introspection and of spirituality—It is India.

●

The ancient history

The ancient history of India is full of descriptions of the gigantic energies and their multifarious workings, the boundless spirit, the combination of indomitable action and reaction of the various forces, and, above all the profound thoughtfulness of a godly race. If the word history is understood to mean merely narratives of kings and emperors, and pictures of society —tyrannised over from time to time by the evil passions, haughtiness, avarice, etc., of the rulers of the time, portraying the acts resulting from their good or evil propensities, and how these reacted upon the society of that time—such a history India perhaps does not possess. But every line of that mass of the religious literature of India, her ocean of poetry, her philosophies and various scientific works reveal to us—a thousand times more clearly than the narratives of the life-incidents and genealogies of particular kings and emperors can ever do—the exact

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position and every step made in advance by that vast body of men who, even before the dawn of civilisation, impelled by hunger and thirst, lust and greed, etc., attracted by the charm of beauty, endowed with a great and indomitable mental power, and moved by various sentiments, arrived through various ways and means at that stage of eminence. Although the heaps of those triumphal flags which they gathered in their innumerable victories over nature with which they had been waging war for ages, have, of late, been torn and tattered by the violent winds of adverse circumstances, and become worn out through age, yet, they still proclaim the glory of Ancient India.

The Aryan race

Whether this race slowly proceeded from Central Asia, Northern Europe, or the Arctic regions, and gradually came down and sanctified India by settling there at last, or whether the holy land of India was their original native place, we have no proper means of knowing now.

Or whether a vast race living in or outside India, being displaced from its original abode, in conformity with natural laws, came in the course of time to colonise and settle over Europe and other places—and whether these people were white or black, blue-eyed or dark-eyed, golden-haired or black-haired —all these matters—there is no sufficient ground to prove now, with the one exception of the fact of the kinship of Sanskrit with a few European languages.

Similarly, it is not easy to arrive at a final conclusion as to the modern Indians, whether they all are the pure descendants of that race, or how much of the blood of that race is flowing in their veins, or again, what races amongst them have any of that even in them.

However, we do not, in fact, lose much by this uncertainty.

But there is one fact to remember. Of that ancient Indian race, upon which the rays of civilisation first dawned, where deep thoughtfulness first revealed itself, in full glory, there are still found hundreds of thousands of its children, born of its mind—the inheritors of its thoughts and sentiments—ready to claim them.

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Crossing over mountains, rivers, and oceans, setting at naught, as it were, the obstacles of the distance of space and time, the blood of Indian thought has flowed, and is still flowing into the veins of other nations of the globe, whether in a distinct, or in some subtle unknown ways. Perhaps to us belongs the major portion of the universal ancient inheritance.

Analytic Mind

नासतः सत् जायते—Existence cannot be produced by non-existence.....

Non-existence can never be the cause of what exists. Something cannot come out of nothing. That the law of causation is omnipotent and knows no time or place when it did not exist, is a doctrine as old as the Aryan race, sung by its ancient poet-seers, formulated by its philosophers, and made the corner-stone upon which the Hindu man even of today builds his whole scheme of life.

There was an inquisitiveness in the race to start with, which very soon developed into bold analysis, and though in the first attempt the work turned out might be like the attempts with shaky hands of the future master-sculptor, it very soon gave way to strict science, bold attempts, and startling results.

Its boldness made these men search every brick of their sacrificial altars ; scan, cement, and pulverise every word of their scriptures ; arrange, re-arrange, doubt, deny, or explain the ceremonies.

It turned their gods inside out, and assigned only a secondary place to their omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent Creator of the universe, their ancestral Father-in-heaven ; or threw Him altogether overboard as useless and started a world-religion without Him with even now the largest following of any religion.

It evolved the science of geometry from the arrangements of bricks to build various altars, and startled the world with astronomical knowledge that arose from the attempts accurately to time their worship and oblations.

It made their contribution to the science of mathematics

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the largest of any race, ancient or modern, and their knowledge of chemistry, of metallic compounds in medicine, their scale of musical notes, their invention of the bow-instruments, of great service in the building of modern European civilisation.

It led them to invent the science of building up the child-mind through shining fables, of which every child in every civilised country learns in a nursery or a school and carries an impress through life.

Poetic insight

Behind and before this analytical keenness, covering it as in a velvet sheath, was the other great mental peculiarity of the race—poetic insight. Its religion, its philosophy, its history, its ethics, its politics were all inlaid in a flower-bed of poetic imagery—the miracle of language which was called Sanskrit or "perfected", lending itself to expressing and manipulating them better than any other tongue. The aid of melodious numbers was invoked even to express the hard facts of mathematics.

This analytical power and the boldness of poetical visions which urged it onward are the two great internal causes in the make-up of the Hindu race. They together formed, as it were, the key-note to the national character. This combination is what is always making the race press onwards beyond the senses—the secret of those speculations which are like the steel blades the artisans used to manufacture—cutting through bars of iron, yet pliable enough to be easily bent into a circle.

They wrought poetry in silver and gold ; the symphony of jewels, the maze of marble wonders, the music of colours, the fine fabrics which belong more to the fairyland of dreams than to the real—have at the back of them thousands of years of working of this national trait.

Arts and sciences, even the realities of domestic life, are covered with a mass of poetical conceptions, which are pressed forward till the sensuous touches the supersensuous, and the real gets the rose-hue of the unreal.

The earliest glimpses we have of this race show it already

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in the possession of this characteristic, as an instrument of some use in its hands. Many forms of religion and society must have been left behind in the onward march, before we find the race as depicted in the scriptures, the Vedas.

An organised pantheon, elaborate ceremonials, divisions of society into hereditary classes necessitated by a variety of occupations, a great many necessaries and a good many luxuries of life are already there.

Fountainhead of spiritualism

This is the ancient land where wisdom made its home before it went into any other country, the same India whose influx of spirituality is represented, as it were, on the material plane, by rolling rivers like oceans, where the eternal Himalayas, rising tier above tier with their snow-caps, look as it were into the very mysteries of heavens. Here is the same India whose soil has been trodden by the feet of the greatest sages that ever lived.

Here first sprang up inquiries into the nature of man, and into the internal world. Here first arose the doctrines of the immortality of the soul, the existence of a supervising God, an immanent God in nature and in man, and here the highest ideals of religion and philosophy have attained their culminating points. This is the land from whence, like the tidal waves, spirituality and philosophy have again and again rushed out and deluged the world.

Struggle for attaining divinity

.....What a land! Whosoever stands on this sacred land, whether alien or a child of the soil, feels himself surrounded —unless his soul is degraded to the level of brute animals— by the living thoughts of the earth's best and purest sons, who have been working to raise the animal to the divine through centuries, whose beginning history fails to trace. The very air is full of the pulsations of spirituality.

This land is sacred to philosophy, to ethics and spirituality, to all that tends to give a respite to man in his incessant struggle for the preservation of the animal, to all training that makes

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man throw off the garment of brutality and stand revealed as the spirit immortal, the birthless, the deathless, the ever-blessed —the land where the cup of pleasure was full, and fuller has been the cup of misery, until here, first of all, man found out that it was all vanity ; here, first of all in the prime of youth, in the lap of luxury, in the height of glory and plenitude of power, he broke through the fetters of delusion.

Here, in this ocean of humanity, amidst the sharp interaction of strong currents of pleasure and pain, of strength and weakness, of wealth and poverty, of joy and sorrow, of smile and tear, of life and death, in the melting rhythm of eternal peace and calmness, arose the throne of renunciation !

Here in this land, the great problems of life and death, of the thirst for life, and the vain mad struggles to preserve it only resulting in the accumulation of woes, were first grappled with and solved—solved as they never were before and never will be hereafter ; for here, and here alone was discovered that even life itself is an evil, the shadow only of something which alone is real.

This is the land where alone religion was practical and real, and here alone men and women plunged boldly in to realise the goal, just as in other lands, they madly plunge in to realise the pleasures of life, by robbing their weaker brethren.

Here, and here alone the human heart expanded till it included not only the human, but birds, beasts, and plants ; from the highest gods to grains of sand, and highest and the lowest, all find a place in the heart of man, grown great, infinite. And here alone, the human soul studied the universe as one unbroken unity whose every pulse was his own pulse.

"Mild Hindu"

The debt which the world owes to our Motherland is immense. Taking country with country, there is not one race on this earth to which the world owes so much as to the patient Hindu, the mild Hindu. "The mild Hindu" sometimes is used as an expression of reproach, but if ever a reproach concealed a wonderful truth it is in the term, "the mild Hindu", who has always been the blessed child of God.

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In ancient times and in modern times, great ideas have emanated from strong and great races. In ancient and in modern times, wonderful ideas have been carried forward from one race to another. In ancient and in modern times, seeds of great truth and power have been cast abroad by the advancing tides of national life ; but mark you, my friends, it has been always with the blast of war trumpets, and with the march of embattled cohorts. Each idea had to be soaked in a deluge of blood. Each idea had to wade through the blood of millions of our fellow-beings. Each word of power had to be followed by the groans of millions, by the wails of orphans, by the tears of widows. This, in the main, other nations have taught.....

Here activity prevailed when even Greece did not exist, when Rome was not thought of, when the very fathers of modern Europeans lived in the forests and painted themselves blue. Even earlier, when history has no record, and tradition dares not peer into the gloom of that intense past, even from then until now, ideas after ideas have marched out from her, but every word has been spoken with a blessing behind it, and peace before it. We, of all nations of the world, have never been a conquering race, and that blessing is on our head.....

Immortal India

There was a time when at the sound of the march of big Greek battalions, the earth trembled. Vanished from off the face of the earth, with not even a tale left behind to tell, gone is that ancient land of the Greeks. There was a time when the Roman Eagle floated over everything worth having in this world ; everywhere Rome's power was felt and pressed on the head of humanity ; the earth trembled at the name of Rome. But the Capitoline Hill is a mass of ruins, the spider weaves its web where the Caesars ruled.

There have been other nations equally glorious that have come and gone, living a few hours of exultant and of exuberant dominance, and of a wicked national life, and then vanishing like ripples on the face of the waters. Thus have these nations made their mark on the face of humanity.

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But we live, and if Manu came back today he would not be bewildered, and would not find himself in a foreign land. The same laws are here, laws adjusted and thought out through thousands and thousands of years ; customs, the outcome of the acumen of ages and the experience of centuries, that seem to be eternal ; and as the days go by, as blow after blow of misfortune has been delivered upon them, such blows seem to have served one purpose only, that of making them stronger and more constant. And to find the centre of all this, the heart from which the blood flows, the main-spring of the national life, believe me when I say after my experience of the world, that it is here.

It is the same India which has withstood the shocks of centuries, of hundreds of foreign invasions. It is the same land which stands firmer than any rock in the world, with its undying vigour, indestructible life. Its life is of the same nature as the soul, without beginning and without end, immortal ; and we are the children of such a country.

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FROM PAST TO PRESENT

The social laws of India have always been subject to great periodic changes. At their inception, these laws were the embodiment of a gigantic plan, which was to unfold itself slowly through time. The great seers of ancient India saw so far ahead of their time that the world has to wait centuries yet to appreciate their wisdom, and it is this very inability, on the part of their own descendants, to appreciate the full scope of this wonderful plan, that is the one and only cause of the degeneration of India. The degeneration of India came not because the laws and customs of the ancients were bad, but because they were not allowed to be carried to their legitimate conclusions.

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Picture of our present-day India

Vast and deep rivers, swelling and impetuous, charming pleasure-gardens by the river banks, putting to shame the celestial Nandana-Kanana ; amidst these pleasure-gardens rise towering to the sky beautiful marble palaces, decorated with the most exquisite workmanship of fine art ; on the sides, in front, and behind, clusters of huts, with crumbling mud-walls and dilapidated roofs, the bamboos of which, forming their skeletons, as it were, are exposed to view ; moving about here and there emaciated figures of young and old in tattered rags, whose faces bear deep-cut lines of the despair and poverty of hundreds of years ; cows, bullocks, buffaloes everywhere—ay, the same melancholy look in their eyes, the same feeble physique ; on the way-side refuse and dirt : This is our present-day India !

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Worn-out huts by the very side of palaces, piles of refuse in the near proximity of temples, the Sannyasin clad with only a little loin-cloth, walking by the gorgeously dressed, the pitiful gaze of lustreless eyes of the hunger-striken at the well-fed and the amply-provided : This is our native land !

Picture that presents itself to a foreigner

Devastation by violent plague and cholera ; malaria eating into the very vitals of the nation ; starvation and semi-starvation as second nature ; death-like famine often dancing its tragic dance ; the Kurukshetra (battle-field) of malady and misery, the huge cremation ground, strewn with the dead bones of lost hope, activity, joy, and courage ; and in the midst of that, sitting in august silence, the Yogi absorbed in deep communion with the Spirit, with no other goal in life than Moksha : This is what meets the eye of the European traveller in India.

A conglomeration of three hundred million souls, resembling men only in appearance, crushed out of life by being downtrodden by their own people and foreign nations, by people professing their own religion and by others of foreign faiths ; patient in labour and suffering, and devoid of initiative, like the slave ; without any hope, without any past, without any future ; desirous only of maintaining the present life anyhow, however precarious ; of malicious nature befitting a slave, to whom the prosperity of their fellowmen is unbearable ; bereft of Shraddhaa, like one with whom all hope is dead, faithless ; whose weapon of defence is base trickery, treachery, and slyness like that of a fox ; the embodiment of selfishness ; licking the dust of the feet of the strong, withal dealing a death-blow to those who are comparatively weak ; full of ugly, diabolical superstitions which come naturally to those who are weak and hopeless of the future ; without any standard of morality as their backbone ; three hundred millions of souls such as these are swarming on the body of India, like so many worms on a rotton, stinking carcass : This is the picture concerning us, which naturally presents itself to the English official !

Westerners in Indian eyes

Maddened with the wine of newly acquired powers ; devoid of discrimination between right and wrong ; fierce like wild

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beasts, henpecked, lustful ; drenched in liquor, having no idea of chastity or purity, nor of cleanly ways and habits ; believing in matter only, with a civilisation resting on matter and its various applications ; addicted to the aggrandisement of self by exploiting others' countries, others' wealth, by force, trick, and treachery ; having no faith in the life hereafter, whose Atman (Self) is the body, whose whole life is only in the senses and creature comforts : Thus, to the Indian, the Westerner is the veriest demon (Asura).

Views derived from without

These are the views of observers on both sides—views born of lack of discrimination and superficial knowledge or ignorance on both sides. The foreigners, the Europeans, come to India, live in palatial buildings in the perfectly clean and healthy quarters of our towns and compare our "native" quarters with their neat and beautifully laid-out cities at home ; the Indians with whom they come in contact are only of one class—those who hold some sort of employment under them. And, indeed, distress and poverty.are nowhere else to be met with as in India ; besides that, there is no gainsaying that dirt and filth are everywhere. To the European mind, it is inconceivable that anything good can possibly be amidst such dirt, such slavery, and such degradation.

We, on the other hand, see that the Europeans eat without discrimination whatever they get, have no idea of cleanliness as we have, do not observe caste distinctions, freely mix with women, drink wine and shamelessly dance at a ball, men and women held in each other's arms : and we ask ourselves in amazement, what good can there be in such a nation ?

Both these views are derived from without, and do not look within and below the surface. We do not allow foreigners to mix in our society, and we call them Mlechchhas ; they also in their turn hate us as slaves and call us "niggers". In both of these views there must be some truth, though neither of the parties has seen the real thing behind the other.

Every living nation—receptacle of an idea

Within every man, there is an idea ; the external man is only the outward manifestation, the mere language of this idea

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within. Likewise, every nation has a corresponding national idea. This idea is working for the world and is necessary for its preservation. The day when the necessity of an idea as an element for the preservation of the world is over, that every day the receptacle of that idea, whether it be an individual or a nation, will meet destruction. The reason that we Indians are still living, in spite of so much misery, distress, poverty, and oppression from within and without is that we have a national idea which is yet necessary for the preservation of the world.

Understand that India is still living, because she has her own quota yet to give to the general store of the world's civilisation.

First, we have to understand that there are not any good qualities which are the privileged monopoly of one nation only. Of course, as with individuals, so with nations, there may be a prevalence of certain good qualities, more or less in one nation than in another.

Ideals of Dharma and Moksha

With us, the prominent idea is Mukti ; with the Westerners, it is Dharma. What we desire is Mukti, what they want is Dharma. Here the word "Dharma" is used in the sense of the Mimamsakas. What is Dharma ? Dharma is that which makes man seek for happiness in this world or the next. Dharma is established on work ; Dharma is impelling man day and night to run after and work for happiness.

What is Mukti ? That which teaches that even the happiness of this life is slavery, and the same is the happiness of the life to come, because neither this world nor the next is beyond the laws of nature ; only, the slavery of this world is to that of the next as an iron chain is to a golden one. Again, happiness, wherever it may be, being within the laws of nature, is subject to death and will not last *ad infinitum*. Therefore man must aspire to become Mukta, he must go beyond the bondage of the body ; slavery will not do. This Moksha-path is only in India and nowhere else.

There was a time in India when Dharma was compatible with Mukti. There were worshippers of Dharma, such as Yudhishthira, Arjuna, Duryodhana, Bhishma, and Karna, side

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by side with the aspirants of Mukti, such as Vyasa, Shuka, and Janaka. On the advent of Buddhism, Dharma was entirely neglected, and the path of Moksha alone became predominant.

Hindu scriptures and the Bauddhas

The Bauddhas declared, "Nothing is more desirable in life than Moksha ; whoever you are, come one and all to take it". I ask, "Is that ever possible ?" "You are a householder, you must not concern yourself much with things of that sort ; you do your Swadharma"—thus say the Hindu scriptures. Exactly so ! He who cannot leap one foot, is going to jump across the ocean to Lanka in one bound ! Is it reason ? You cannot feed your own family or dole out food to two of your fellow-men, you cannot do even an ordinary piece of work for the common good, in harmony with others—and you are running after Mukti ! The Hindu scriptures say, "No doubt, Moksha is far superior to Dharma ; but Dharma should be finished (fulfilled) first of all". The Bauddhas were confounded just there and brought about all sorts of mischief. Non-injury is right ; "Resist not evil" is a great thing—these are indeed grand principles ; but the Shastras say, "Thou art a householder ; if anyone smites thee on thy cheek, and thou dost not return him an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, thou wilt verily be a sinner". Manu says,

गुरुं वा बालवृद्धौ वा ब्राह्मणं वा बहुश्रुतम् ।
आततायिनमायान्तं हन्यादेवाविचारयन् ॥ (*Manu, VIII. 350*)

"When one has come to kill you, there is no sin in killing him, even though he be a Brahmin". This is very true, and this is a thing which should not be forgotten.

Do your Swadharma, this is the truth of truths

Heroes only enjoy the world. Show you heroism ; apply, according to circumstances, the fourfold political maxims of conciliation, bribery, sowing dissensions, and open war, to win over your adversary and enjoy the world—then you will be Dharmika. Otherwise, you live a disgraceful life if you pocket your insults, when you are kicked and trodden down by anyone who takes it into his head to do so ; your life is a veritable hell here, and so is the life hereafter. This is what the Shastras say.

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Do your Swadharma—this is truth, the truth of truths. This is my advice to you, my beloved co-religionists. Of course, do not do any wrong, do not injure or tyrannise over anyone, but try to do good to others as much as you can. But passively to submit to wrong done by others is a sin—with the householder. He must try to pay them back in their own coin then and there. The householder must earn money with great effort and enthusiasm, and by that must support and bring comforts to his own family and to others, and perform good works as far as possible. If you cannot do that, how do you profess to be a man ? You are not a householder even—what to talk of Moksha for you ! !

Different paths for two different natures

Now what is that good which is to be pursued ? The good for him who desires Moksha is one, and the good for him who wants Dharma is another. This is the great truth which the Lord Shri Krishna, the revealer of the Gita, has tried therein to explain, and upon this great truth is established the Varnashrama system and the doctrine of Swadharma etc. of the Hindu religion.

अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च ।
निर्ममो निरहंकारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी ॥ (*Gita, XII. 13*)

"He who has no enemy, and is friendly and compassionate towards all, who is free from the feelings of 'me and mine', even-minded in pain and pleasure, and forbearing" : these and other epithets of like nature are for him whose one goal in life is Moksha.

क्लैब्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते ।
क्षुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परंतप ॥ (*Gita, II. 3*)

"Yield not to unmanliness, O son of Pritha ! Ill doth it befit thee. Cast off this mean faint-heartedness and arise O scorcher of thine enemies".

तस्मात्त्वमुत्तिष्ठ यशो लभस्व
जित्वा शत्रून्भुङ्क्ष्व राज्यं समृद्धम् ।
मयैवैते निहताः पूर्वमेव
निमित्तमात्रं भव सव्यसाचिन् ॥ (*Gita, XI. 33*)

"Therefore do thou arise and acquire fame. After conquering thy enemies, enjoy unrivalled domination ; verily, by

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Myself have they been already slain; be thou merely the instrument, O Savyasachin (Arjuna)".

Sattvika calmness and Tamasika inertia—the difference

Now, tell me, looking from outside, how are we to understand, whether you are in a state wherein the Sattva or the Tamas prevails? Whether we are in the state of Sattvika calmness, beyond all pleasure and pain, and past all work and activity, or whether we are in the lowest Tamasika state, lifeless, passive, dull as dead matter, and doing no work, because there is no power in us to do it, and are, thus silently and by degrees, getting rotten and corrupted within—I seriously ask you this question and demand an answer. Ask your own mind, and you shall know what the reality is.

Sattvika calmness, storehouse of great powers

But, what need to wait for the answer?—The tree is known by its fruit. The Sattva prevailing, the man is inactive, he is calm, to be sure; but that inactivity is the outcome of the centralisation of great powers, that calmness is the mother of tremendous energy. That highly Sattvika man, that great soul, has no longer to work as we do with hands and feet—by his mere willing only, all his works are immediately accomplished to perfection.

That man of predominating Sattva is the Brahmin, the worshipped of all. Has he to go about from door to door, begging others to worship him? The Almighty Mother of the universe writes with Her own hand, in golden letters on his forehead, "Worship ye all, this great one, this son of Mine", and the world reads and listens to it and humbly bows down its head before him in obedience. That man is really—

अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च ।
निर्ममो निरहंकारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी ॥ (*Gita, XII 13*)

"He who has no enemy, and is friendly and compassionate towards all, who is free from the feelings of 'me and mine', even-minded in pain and pleasure, and forbearing".

Tamasika passiveness, sign of death

And mark you, those things which you see in pusillanimous, effeminate folk who speak in a nasal tone chewing every syllable,

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whose voice is as thin as of one who has been starving for a week, who are like a tattered wet rag, who never protest or are moved even if kicked by anybody—those are the signs of the lowest Tamas, those are the signs of death, not of Sattva—all corruption and stench.

It is because Arjuna was going to fall into the ranks of these men that the Lord is explaining matters to him so elaborately in the Gita. Is that not the fact ? Listen to the very first words that came out of the mouth of the Lord—क्लैब्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते—"Yield not to unmanliness. O Partha ! Ill doth it befit thee !" and then later—तस्मात्त्वमुत्तिष्ठ यशो लभस्व—"Therefore do thou arise and acquire fame."

During these last thousand years, the whole country is filling the air with the name of the Lord and is sending its prayers to Him ; and the Lord is never lending His ears to them. And why should He ? When even man never hears the cries of the fool, do you think God will ? Now the only way out is to listen to the words of the Lord in the Gita—क्लैब्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ—"Yield not to unmanliness. O Partha !"—तस्मात्त्वमुत्तिष्ठ यशो लभस्व—"Therefore do thou arise and acquire fame".

The great irony

.... See the irony of it. Jesus Christ, the God of the Europeans, has taught : Have no enemy, bless them that curse you ; whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also ; stop all your work and be ready for the next world ; the end of the world is near at hand. And our Lord in the Gita is saying : Always work with great enthusiasm, destroy your enemies and enjoy the world. But, after all, it turned out to be exactly the reverse of what Christ or Krishna implied.

The Europeans never took the words of Jesus Christ seriously. Always of active habits, being possessed of a tremendous Rajasika nature, they are gathering with great enterprise and youthful ardour the comforts and luxuries of the different countries of the world, and enjoying them to their hearts' content.

And we are sitting in a corner, with our bag and baggage,

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pondering on death day and night, and singing :

नलिनीदलगतजलमतितरलं
तद्वज्जीवनमतिशयचपलम् ।

—"Very tremulous and unsteady is the water on the lotusleaf ; so is the life of man frail and transient"—with the result that it is making our blood run cold and our flesh creep with the fear of Yama, the god of death ; and Yama, too, alas, has taken us at our word, as it were—plague and all sorts of maladies have entered into our country.

Who are following the teachings of the Gita ?—the Europeans ! And who are acting according to the will of Jesus Christ ?—The descendants of Shri Krishna ! This must be well understood.

Teachings of Buddha and Christ

The aims of the Buddhistic and the Vedic religions are the same, but the means adopted by the Buddhistic are not right. If the Buddhistic means were correct, then why have we been thus hopelessly lost and ruined ? It will not do to say that the efflux of time has naturally wrought this. Can time work, transgressing the laws of cause and effect ?

Europe shook off Christ and was saved

It is only the Vedic religion which considers ways and means and lays down rules for the fourfold attainment of man, comprising Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha. Buddha ruined us, and so did Christ ruin Greece and Rome ! Then, in due course of time, fortunately, the Europeans became protestants, shook off the teachings of Christ as represented by Papal authority, and heaved a sigh of relief.

In India, Kumarila again brought into currency the Karma-Marga, the way of Karma only, and Shankara and Ramanuja firmly re-established the Eternal Vedic religion, harmonising and balancing in due proportions Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. Thus the nation was brought to the way of regaining its lost life ; but India has three hundred million souls to wake, and hence the delay. To revive three hundred millions—can it be done in a day ?

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RELIGION, THE SOUL OF INDIA

.... Each nation has a destiny to fulfil, each naton has a message to deliver, each nation has a mission to accomplish. Therefore, from the very start, we must have to understand the mission of our own race, the destiny it has to fulfil, the place it has to occupy in the march of nations, the note which it has to contribute to the harmony of races.

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We are Hindus

We are Hindus. I do not use the word Hindu in any bad sense at all, nor do I agree with those that think there is any bad meaning in it. In old times, it simply meant people who lived on the other side of the Indus : today a good many among those who hate us may have put a bad interpretation upon it, but names are nothing. Upon us depends whether the name Hindu will stand for everything that is glorious, everything that is spiritual, or whether it will remain a name of opprobrium, one designating the downtrodden, the worthless, the heathen. If at present the word Hindu means anything bad, never mind ; by our action let us be ready to show that this is the highest word that any language can invent.

It has been one of the principles of my life not to be ashamed of my own ancestors. I am one of the proudest men ever born, but let me tell you frankly, it is not for myself, but on account of my ancestry. The more I have studied the past, the more I have looked back, more and more has this pride come to me,

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and it has given me the strength and courage of conviction, raised me up from the dust of the earth, and set me working out that great plan laid out by those great ancestors of ours.

Children of those ancient Aryans, through the grace of the Lord may you have the same pride, may that faith in your ancestors come into your blood, may it become a part and parcel of your lives, may it work towards the salvation of the world !

Each nation has a destiny to fulfil

Just as there is an individuality in every man, so there is a national individuality. As one man differs from another in certain particulars, in certain characteristics of his own, so one race differs from another in certain peculiar characteristics ; and just as it is the mission of every man to fulfil a certain purpose in the economy of nature, just as there is a particular line set out for him by his own past Karma, so it is with nations—each nation has a destiny to fulfil, each nation has a message to deliver, each nation has a mission to accomplish.

Therefore, from the very start, we must have to understand the mission of our own race, the destiny it has to fulfil, the place it has to occupy in the march of nations, the note which it has to contribute to the harmony of races.

Nation's soul

In our country, when children, we hear stories how some serpents have jewels in their heads, and whatever one may do with the serpent, so long as the jewel is there, the serpent cannot be killed. We hear stories of giants and ogres who had souls living in certain little birds, and so long as the bird was safe, there was no power on earth to kill these giants ; you might hack them to pieces, or do what you liked to them, the giants could not die. So with nations, there is a certain point where the life of a nation centres, where lies the nationality of the nation, and until that is touched, the nation cannot die.

Again another thing you will observe, that a nation will never greatly grudge if it be deprived of those rights which have not much to do with its national purpose, nay, even if all of such

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are wrested from it ; but when the slightest blow is given to that purpose on which rests its national life, that moment it reacts with tremendous power.

The French and the English character

Take for instance the case of the three living nations, of whose history you know more or less, viz. the French, the English, and the Hindu. Political independence is the backbone of the French character. French subjects bear calmly all oppressions. Burden them with heavy taxes, they will not raise the least voice against them ; compel the whole nation to join the army, they never complain ; but the instant anyone meddles with that political independence, the whole nation will rise as one man and madly react. No one man shall be allowed to usurp authority over us ; whether learned or ignorant, rich or poor, of noble birth or of the lower classes, we have equal share in the Government of our country, and in the independent control of our society—this is the root-principle of the French character. He must suffer, who will try to interfere with this freedom.

In the English character, the "give and take" policy, the business principle of the trader, is principally inherent. To the English, equity, equal partition of privileges, is of essential interest. The Englishman humbly submits to the king and to the privileges of the nobility ; only if he has to pay a farthing from his pocket, he must demand an account of it. There is the king ; that is all right ; he is ready to obey and honour him ; but if the king wants money, the Englishman says : All right, but first let me understand why it is needed, what good it will bring ; next, I must have my say in the matter of how it is to be spent, and then I shall part with it. The king, once trying to exact money from the English people by force, brought about a great revolution. They killed the king.

The Hindu character

The Hindu says that political and social independence are well and good, but the real thing is spiritual independence—Mukti. This is our national purpose ; whether you take the Vaidika, the Jaina, or the Bauddha, the Advaita, the Vishishtadvaita, or the Dvaita—there, they are all of one mind.

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Leave that point untouched and do whatever you like, the Hindu is quite unconcerned and keeps silence ; but if you run foul of him there, beware, you court your ruin. Rob him of everything he has, kick him, call him a "nigger" or any such name, he does not care much ; only keep that one gate of religion free and unmolested.

Look here, how in the modern period the Pathan dynasties were coming and going, but could not get a firm hold of their Indian Empire, because they were all along attacking the Hindu's religion. And see, how firmly based, how tremendously strong was the Mogul Empire. Why ? Because the Moguls left that point untouched. In fact, Hindus were the real prop of the Mogul Empire. . . . .

We have seen that our vigour, our strength, nay, our national life is in our religion. I am not going to discuss now whether it is right or not, whether it is correct or not, whether it is beneficial or not in the long run, to have this vitality in religion, but for good or evil it is there ; you cannot get out of it, you have it now and for ever, and you have to stand by it, even if you have not the same faith that I have in our religion. You are bound by it, and if you give it up you are smashed to pieces. That is the life of our race and that must be strengthened.

'Somnath' will teach you volumes of wisdom

You have withstood the shocks of centuries simply because you took great care of it, you sacrificed everything else for it. Your forefathers underwent everything boldly, even death itself, but preserved their religion. Temple after temple was broken down by the foreign conqueror, but no sooner had the wave passed than the spire of the temple rose up again.

Some of these old temples of Southern India, and those like Somnath of Gujarat, will teach you volumes of wisdom, will give you a keener insight into the history of the race than any amount of books. Mark how these temples bear the marks of a hundred attacks and a hundred regenerations, continually destroyed and continually springing up out of the ruins, rejuvenated and strong as ever ! That is the national mind, that is the national life-current. Follow it and it leads to glory. Give

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it up and you die ; death will be the only result, annihilation the only effect, the moment you step beyond that life-current.

I do not mean to say that other things are not necessary. I do not mean to say that political or social improvements are not necessary, but what I mean is this, and I want you to bear it in mind, that they are secondary here, and that religion is primary.

Character evolved out of thousands of centuries

Now you understand clearly where the soul of this nation is—it is in religion. Because no one was able to destroy that, therefore the Hindu nation is still living, having survived so many troubles and tribulations. Well, one Indian scholar asks, "What is the use of keeping the soul of the nation in religion ? Why not keep it in social or political independence, as is in the case with other nations ?" It is very easy to talk like that.

If it be granted, for the sake of argument, that religion and spiritual independence, and soul, God, and Mukti are all false, even then see how that matter stands. As the same fire is manifesting itself in different forms, so the same one great Force is manifesting itself as political independence with the French, as mercantile genius and expansion of the sphere of equity with the English and as the desire for Mukti or spiritual independence with the Hindu.

Be it noted that by the impelling of this great Force, has been moulded the French and the English character, through several centuries of vicissitudes of fortune ; and also by the inspiration of that great Force, with the rolling of thousands of centuries, has been the present evolution of the Hindu national character.

I ask in all seriousness—which is easier, to give up our national character evolved out of thousands of centuries, or your grafted foreign character of a few hundred years ? Why do not the English forget their warlike habits and give up fighting and bloodshed, and sit calm and quiet concentrating their whole energy on making religion the sole aim of their life ?

The fact is, that the river has come down a thousand miles from its source in the mountains ; does it, or can it go back

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to its source ? If it ever tries to trace back its course, it will simply dry up by being dissipated in all directions. Anyhow the river is sure to fall into the ocean, sooner or later, either by passing through open and beautiful plains or struggling through grimy soil.

If our national life of these ten thousand years has been a mistake, then there is no help for it ; and if we try now to form a new character, the inevitable result will be that we shall die.

Hidden fire of our national life

But, excuse me if I say that it is sheer ignorance and want of proper understanding to think like that, namely, that our national ideal has been a mistake. First go to other countries and study carefully their manners and conditions with your own eyes—not with others'—and reflect on them with a thoughtful brain, if you have it ; then read your own scriptures, your ancient literature, travel throughout India, and mark the people of her different parts and their ways and habits with the wide-awake eye of an intelligent and keen observer—not with a fool's eye—and you will see as clear as noonday that the nation is still living intact and its life is surely pulsating.

You will find there also that, hidden under the ashes of apparent death, the fire of our national life is yet smouldering and that the life of this nation is religion, its language religion, and its idea religion ; and your politics, society, municipality, plague-prevention work, and famine-relief work—all these things will be done as they have been done all along here, viz. only through religion ; otherwise all your frantic yelling and bewailing will end in nothing. .....

The theme of national life-music and its variations

Each nation has its own peculiar method of work. Some work through politics, some through social reforms, some through other lines. With us, religion is the only ground along which we can move. The Englishman can understand religion even through politics. Perhaps the American can understand religion even through social reforms. But the Hindu can understand even politics when it is given through religion ; sociology must come through religion, everything must come through

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religion. For that is the theme, the rest are the variations in the national life-music.

There may be a nation whose theme of life is political supremacy ; religion and everything else must become subordinate to that one great theme of its life. But here is another nation whose great theme of life is spirituality and renunciation, whose one watchword is, that this world is all vanity and a delusion of three days ; and everything else, whether science or knowledge, enjoyments or powers, wealth, name or fame, must be subordinated to that one theme.

The secret of a true Hindu's character lies in the subordination of his knowledge of European sciences and learning, of his wealth, position, and name, to that one principal theme which is inborn in every Hindu child—the spirituality and purity of the race.

Keep firm hold on spirituality

But mark you, if you give up that spirituality, leaving it aside to go after the materialising civilisation of the West, the result will be that in three generations you will be an extinct race ; because the backbone of the nation will be broken, the foundation upon which the national edifice has been built will be undermined, and the result will be annihilation all round.

Therefore, my friends, the way out is that first and foremost we must keep a firm hold on spirituality—that in-estimable gift handed down to us by our ancient forefathers. Did you ever hear of a country where the greatest kings tried to trace their descent not to kings, not to robber-barons living in old castles who plundered poor travellers, but to seminaked sages who lived in the forest ? Did you ever hear of such a land ? This is the land. In other countries great priests try to trace their descent to some king, but here the greatest kings would trace their descent to some ancient priest.

Therefore whether you believe in spirituality or not, for the sake of the national life, you have to get a hold on spirituality and keep to it. Then stretch the other hand out and gain all you can from other races, but everything must be subordinated to that one ideal of life ; and out of that a wonderful, glorious future India will come—I am sure it is coming—a greater India than ever was.

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THE TASK OF REGENERATION : ITS BASIS AND DIRECTION

O Bharat !

With this mere echoing of others, with this base imitation of others, with this dependence on others,.....

wouldst thou, with these provisions only, scale the highest pinnacle of civilisation and greatness ?

Wouldst thou attain, by means of thy disgraceful cowardice, that freedom deserved only by the brave and the heroic ?

O Bharat !

Forget not that the ideal of thy womanhood is Sita, Savitri, Damayanti ;

forget not that the God thou worshippest is the great Ascetic of ascetics the all-renouncing Shankara, the Lord of Uma ;

forget not that thy marriage, thy wealth, thy life are not for sense-pleasure, are not for thy individual personal happiness ;

forget not that thou art born as a sacrifice to the Mother's altar ;

forget not that thy social order is but the reflex of the Infinite Universal Motherhood ;

forget not that the lower classes, the ignorant, the poor, the illiterate, the cobbler, the sweeper, are thy flesh and blood, are thy brothers.

Thou brave one,

be bold, take courage, be proud that thou art a Bharatvasi and proudly proclaim, "I am a Bharatvasi, every Bharatvasi is my brother."

Say, "The ignorant Bharatvasi, the poor and destitute Bharatvasi, the Brahmin Bharatvasi, the Pariah Bharatvasi, is my brother".

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Thou, too, clad with but a rag round thy loins,

proudly proclaim at the top of thy voice : "The Bharatvasi is my brother, the Bharatiya is my life, Bharat's gods and goddesses are my God. Bharat's society is the cradle of my infancy, the pleasure-garden of my youth, the sacred heaven, the Varanasi of my old age".

Brother,

say : "The soil of Bharat is my highest heaven, the good of Bharat is my good".

and repeat and pray day and night, "O Thou Lord of Gouri, O Thou Mother of the Universe, vouchsafe manliness unto me ! O Thou Mother of Strength, take away my weakness, take away my unmanliness, and make me a Man !"

What comes from the West is the best !

In the beginning of the present century, when Western influence began to pour into India, when Western conquerors, sword in hand, came to demonstrate to the children of the sages that they were mere barbarians, a race of dreamers, that their religion was but mythology, and god and soul and everything they had been struggling for were mere words without meaning, that the thousands of years of struggle, the thousands of years of endless renunciation, had all been in vain, the question began to be agitated among young men at the universities whether the whole national existence up to then had been a failure, whether they must begin anew on the occidental plan, tear up their old books, burn their philosophies, drive away their preachers, and break down their temples. Did not the occidental conqueror, the man who demonstrated his religion with sword and gun, say that all the old ways were mere superstition and idolatry ?

Children brought up and educated in the new schools started on the occidental plan, drank in these ideas, from their childhood ; and it is not to be wondered at that doubts arose. But instead of throwing away superstition and making a real search

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after truth, the test of truth became, "What does the West say ?" The priests must go, the Vedas must be burned, because the West has said so.

All drift towards the strong

I observed in the West also that the children of weaker nations, if born in England, give themselves out as Englishmen, instead of Greek, Portuguese, Spaniard, etc., as the case may be. All drift towards the strong. That the light of glory which shines in the glorious may anyhow fall and reflect on one's own body, i.e., to shine in the borrowed light of the great, is the one desire of the weak.

India awakening from its slumber

The present government of India has certain evils attendant on it, and there are some very great and good parts in it as well. Of highest good is this, that after the fall of the Pataliputra Empire till now, India was never under the guidance of such a powerful machinery of government as the British, wielding the sceptre throughout the length and breadth of the land.

And, under this Vaishya supremacy, thanks to the strenuous enterprise natural to the Vaishya, as the objects of commerce are being brought from one end of the world to another, so at the same time, as its natural sequence, the ideas and thoughts of different countries are forcing their way into the very bone and marrow of India. Of these ideas and thoughts, some are really most beneficial to her, some are harmful, while others disclose the ignorance and inability of the foreigners to determine what is truly good for the inhabitants of this country.

But piercing through the mass of whatever good or evil there may be is seen rising the sure emblem of India's future prosperity—that as the result of the action and reaction between her own old national ideals, on the one hand, and the newly-introduced strange ideals of foreign nations, on the other, she is slowly and gently awakening from her long deep sleep.

.....As the result of this little awakening, is the appearance, to a certain extent, of free and independent thought in modern India. On one side is modern Western science, dazzling the eyes with the brilliancy of myriad suns, and driving in

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the chariot of hard and fast facts collected by the application of tangible powers direct in their incision ; on the other are the hopeful and strengthening traditions of her ancient forefathers, in the days when she was at the zenith of her glory—traditions that have been brought out of the pages of her history by the great sages of her own land and outside, that run for numberless years and centuries through her every vein with the quickening of life drawn from universal love—traditions that reveal unsurpassed valour, superhuman genius, and supreme spirituality, which are the envy of the gods—these inspire her with future hopes.

On one side, rank materialism, plenitude of fortune, accumulation of gigantic power, and intense sense-pursuits have, through foreign literature, caused a tremendous stir ; on the other, through the confounding din of all these discordant sounds, she hears, in low yet unmistakable accents, the heart-rending cries of her ancient gods, cutting her to the quick.

There lie before her various strange luxuries introduced from the West—celestial drinks, costly well-served food, splendid apparel, magnificent palaces, new modes of conveyance, new manners, new fashions dressed in which moves about the well-educated girl in shameless freedom—all these are arousing unfelt desires.

Again, the scene changes, and in its place appear, with stern presence, Sita, Savitri, austere religious vows, fastings, the forest retreat, the matted locks and orange garb of the semi-naked Sannyasin, Samadhi and the search after the Self. On one side is the independence of Western societies based on self-interest ; on the other is the extreme self-sacrifice of the Aryan society. In this violent conflict, is it strange that Indian society should be tossed up and down ?

Of the West, the goal is individual independence, the language, money-making education, the means, politics ; of India, the goal is Mukti, the language, the Veda, the means, renunciation.

For a time, Modern India thinks, as it were, I am ruining this worldly life of mine in vain expectation of uncertain spiritual welfare hereafter which has spread its fascination over me ;

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and again, lo ! spellbound she listens—इति संसारे स्फुटतरदोषः कथमिह मानव तव सन्तोषः—"Here, in this world of death and change, O man, where is thy happiness ?"

On one side, new India is saying, "If we only adopt Western ideas, Western language, Western food, Western dress, and Western manners, we shall be as strong and powerful as the Western nations" ; on the other, old India is saying, "Fools ! By imitation, other's ideas never become one's own ; nothing unless earned, is your own. Does the ass in the lion's skin become the lion ?"

On one side, new India is saying, "What the Western nations do is surely good, otherwise how did they become so great ?" On the other side, old India is saying, "The flash of lightning is intensely bright, but only for a moment ; look out, it is dazzling your eyes. Beware !"

Learn but do not imitate slavishly

Have we not then to learn anything from the West ? Must we not needs try and exert ourselves for better things ? Are we perfect ? Is our society entirely spotless, without any flaw ? There are many things to learn, we must struggle for new and higher things till we die—struggle is the end of human life.

Shri Ramakrishna used to say, "As long as I live, so long do I learn". That man or that society which has nothing to learn is already in the jaws of death. Yes, learn we must many things from the West. But there are fears as well.

A certain young man of little understanding used always to blame the Hindu Shastras before Shri Ramarkrishna. One day he praised the Bhagavad-Gita, on which Shri Ramakrishna said, "Methinks, some European Pandit has praised the Gita, and so he has also followed suit".

O India, this is your terrible danger. The spell of imitating the West is getting such a strong hold upon you that what is good or what is bad is no longer decided by reason, judgment, discrimination, or reference to the Shastras. Whatever ideas, whatever manners the white men praise or like are good ; whatever things they dislike or censure are bad ! Alas ! What can be a more tangible proof of foolishness than this ?

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What is meat for them may be poison for us

We must grow according to our nature. Vain is it to attempt the lines of action that foreign societies have engrafted upon us ; it is impossible. Glory unto God, that it is impossible, that we cannot be twisted and tortured into the shape of other nations.

I do not condemn the institutions of other races ; they are good for them, but not for us. What is meat for them may be poison for us. This is the first lesson to learn. With other sciences, other institutions, and other traditions behind them, they have got their present system. We, with our traditions, with thousands of years of Karma behind us, naturally can only follow our own bent, run in our own grooves. ....

Two types of civilizations

Two attempts have been made in the world to found social life ; the one was upon religion, and the other was upon social necessity. The one was founded upon spirituality, the other upon materialism ; the one upon transcendentalism, the other upon realism. The one looks beyond the horizon of this little material world and is bold enough to begin life there, even apart from the other. The other, the second, is content to take its stand on the things of the world and expects to find a firm footing there.

Each again will have its type ; the religious or introspective in India, the scientific or out-seeing in the West. The West wants every bit of spirituality through social improvement. The East wants every bit of social power through spirituality. Thus it was that the modern reformers saw no way to reform but by first crushing out the religion of India. They tried and they failed. Why ? Because few of them ever studied their own religion, and not *one* ever *underwent* the training necessary to understand the *Mother of all religions.*

I claim that no destruction of religion is necessary to improve the Hindu society, and that this state of society exists not on account of religion, but because religion has not been applied to society as it should have been.

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Adjustments necessary but India can never be Europe

In India, new circumstances at the same time are persistently demanding a new adjustment of social organisations. For the last three-quarters of a century, India has been bubbling over with reform societies and reformers. But alas, every one of them has proved a failure. They did not know the secret. They had not learnt the great lesson to be learnt. In their haste, they laid all the evils in our society at the door of religion ; and like the man in the story, wanting to kill the mosquito that sat on a friend's forehead, they were trying to deal such heavy blows as would have killed man and mosquito together. But in this case, fortunately, they only dashed themselves against immovable rocks and were crushed out of existence in the shock of recoil.

Glory unto those noble and unselfish souls who have struggled and failed in their misdirected attempts. Those galvanic shocks of reformatory zeal were necessary to rouse the sleeping leviathan. But they were entirely destructive, and not constructive, and as such they were mortal, and therefore died.

Let us bless them and profit by their experience. They had not learnt the lesson that all is a growth from inside out, that all evolution is only a manifestation of a preceding involution. They did not know that the seed can only assimilate the surrounding elements, but grows a tree in its own nature. Until all the Hindu race becomes extinct, and a new race takes possession of the land, such a thing can never be—try East or West, India can never be Europe. .....

I grant that we have to take a great many things from other nations, that we have to learn many lessons from outside ; but I am sorry to say that most of our modern reform-movements have been inconsiderate imitations of Western means and methods of work ; and that surely will not do for India ; therefore it is that all our recent reform-movements have had no result. .... We must try to keep our historically acquired character as a people.

Changing forms, round an unchanging centre

We have first to learn the distinction between the essentials and the non-essentials in everything. The essentials are eternal, the non-essentials have value only for a certain time. ....

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Caste is continually changing, rituals are continually changing, so are forms. It is the substance, the principle, that does not change. It is in the Vedas that we have to study our religion. With the exception of the Vedas every book must change.

.... The Vedas being eternal will be one and the same throughout all ages, but the Smritis will have an end. As time rolls on, more and more of the Smritis will go, sages will come, and they will change and direct society into better channels, into duties and into paths according to the necessity of the age, and without which it is impossible that society can live.

Great things have been done in the past in this land, and there is both time and room for greater things to be done yet. I am sure you know that we cannot stand still. If we stand still we die. We have either to go forward or to go backward. We have either to progress or to degenerate. Our ancestors did great things in the past, but we have to grow into a fuller life and march beyond even their great achievements. How can we now go back and degenerate ourselves ? That cannot be ; that must not be ; going back will lead to national decay and death. Therefore, let us go forward and do yet greater things ; that is what I have to tell you.

Time-honoured social institutions of India

Though our castes and our institutions are apparently linked with our religion, they are not so. These institutions have been necessary to protect us as a nation, and when this necessity for self-preservation will no more exist, they will die a natural death.

But the older I grow, the better I seem to think of these time-honoured institutions of India. There was a time when I used to think that many of them were useless and worthless ; but the older I grow, the more I seem to feel a diffidence in cursing any one of them, for each one of them is the embodiment of the experience of centuries.

A child of but yesterday, destined to die the day after tomorrow, comes to me and asks me to change all my plans ; and if I hear the advice of that baby and change all my

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surroundings according to his ideas, I myself should be a fool, and no one else.

Much of the advice that is coming to us from different countries is similar to this. Tell these wiseacres : "I will hear you when you have made a stable society yourselves. You cannot hold on to one idea for two days, you quarrel and fail ; you are born like moths in the spring and die like them in five minutes. You come up like bubbles and burst like bubbles too. First form a stable society like ours. First make laws and institutions that remain undiminished in their power through scores of centuries. Then will be the time to talk on the subject with you, but till then, my friend, you are only a giddy child".

Our scheme of human progress : Its realisation

I am no preacher of any momentary social reform. I am not trying to remedy evils, I only ask you to go forward and to complete the practical realisation of the scheme of human progress, that has been laid out in the most perfect order by our ancestors. I only ask you to work to realise more and more the Vedantic ideal of the solidarity of man and his inborn divine nature. ....

.. Our ancient law-givers .. .. also were breakers of caste, but they were not like our modern men. They did not mean by the breaking of caste that all the people in a city should sit down together to a dinner of beefsteak and champagne, nor that all fools and lunatics in the country should marry when, where, and whom they chose and reduce the country to a lunatic asylum, nor did they believe that the prosperity of a nation is to be gauged by the number of husbands its widows get. I have yet to see such a prosperous nation.

Brahmin-ness the ideal of the Hindu race

The ideal man of our ancestors was the Brahmin. In all our books stands out prominently this ideal of the Brahmin. In Europe there is My Lord the Cardinal, who is struggling hard and spending thousands of pounds to prove the nobility of his ancestors, and he will not be satisfied until he has traced his ancestry to some dreadful tyrant, who lived on a hill and watched the people passing by, and whenever he had the opportunity,

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sprang out on them and robbed them. That was the business of these nobility-bestowing ancestors, and my Lord Cardinal is not satisfied until he can trace his ancestry to one of these.

In India, on the other hand, the greatest princes seek to trace their descent to some ancient sage who dressed in a bit of loin-cloth, lived in a forest, eating roots and studying the Vedas. It is there that the Indian prince goes to trace his ancestry. You are of the high caste when you can trace your ancestry to a Rishi, and not otherwise.

Our ideal of high birth, therefore, is different from that of others. Our ideal is the Brahmin of spiritual culture and renunciation. By the Brahmin ideal what do I mean ? I mean the ideal Brahmin-ness in which worldliness is altogether absent and true wisdom is abundantly present. That is the ideal of the Hindu race.

Have you not heard how it is declared that he, the Brahmin, is not amenable to law, that he has no law, that he is not governed by kings, and that his body cannot be hurt ? That is perfectly true. Do not understand it in the light thrown upon it by interested and ignorant fools, but understand it in the light of the true and original Vedantic conception.

Withering away of the state

If the Brahmin is he who has killed all selfishness and who lives and works to acquire and propagate wisdom and the power of love—if a country is altogether inhabited by such Brahmins, by men and women who are spiritual and moral and good, is it strange to think of that country as being above and beyond all law ? What police, what military are necessary to govern them ? Why should any one govern them at all ? Why should they live under a government ? They are good and noble, and they are the men of God ; these are our ideal Brahmins, and we read that in the Satya Yuga there was only one caste, and that was the Brahmin.

No castes in Satya Yuga—all Brahmins

We read in the Mahabharata that the whole world was in the beginning peopled with Brahmins, and that as they began

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to degenerate they became divided into different castes:

[न विशेषोऽस्ति वर्णानां सर्वं ब्राह्ममिदं जगत्]

ब्रह्मणा पूर्वसृष्टं हि कर्मभिर्वर्णतां गतम् ॥ (*MBh. Shanti P.*)]

and that when the cycle turns round they will all go back to that Brahminical origin. This cycle is turning round now, and I draw your attention to this fact.

Therefore, our solution of the caste question is not degrading those who are already high up, is not running amuck through food and drink, is not jumping out of our own limits in order to have more enjoyment, but it comes by every one of us fulfilling the dictates of our Vedantic religion, by our attaining spirituality, and by our becoming the ideal Brahmin.

Every one has to become the ideal Brahmin again

There is a law laid on each one of you in this land by your ancestors, whether you are Aryans, or Non-Aryans, Rishis, or Brahmins, or the very lowest outcasts. The command is the same to you all, that you must make progress without stopping, and that, from the highest man to the lowest Pariah, every one in this country has to try and become the ideal Brahmin. This Vedantic idea is applicable not only here but over the whole world.

Such is our ideal of caste, as meant for raising all humanity slowly and gently towards the realisation of that great ideal of the spiritual man, who is non-resisting, calm, steady, worshipful, pure, and meditative. In that ideal there is God.

Europeanised class of reformers

There are among us at the present day certain reformers who want to reform our religion, or rather turn it topsyturvy, with a view to the regeneration of the Hindu nation. There are, no doubt, some thoughtful people among them, but there are also many who follow others blindly and act most foolishly, not knowing what they are about. This class of reformers are very enthusiastic in introducing foreign ideas into our religion. They have taken hold of the word "idolatry", and aver that Hinduism is not true, because it is idolatrous. They never seek to find out what this so-called "idolatry" is, whether it is

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good or bad ; only taking their cue from others, they are bold enough to shout down Hinduism as untrue.

It has become a trite saying that idolatry is wrong, and every man swallows it at the present time without questioning. I once thought so, and to pay the penalty of that I had to learn my lesson sitting at the feet of a man who realised everything through idols ; I allude to Ramakrishna Paramahamsa.

If such Ramakrishna Paramahamsas are produced by idol-worship, what will you have—the reformer's creed or any number of idols ? I want an answer. Take a thousand idols more if you can produce Ramakrishna Paramahamsas through idol-worship, and may God speed you ! Produce such noble natures by any means you can.

Yet idolatry is condemned ! Why ? Nobody knows. Because some hundreds of years ago some man of Jewish blood happened to condemn it ? That is, he happened to condemn everybody else's idols except his own. If God is represented in any beautiful form, or any symbolic form, said the Jew, it is awfully bad ; it is sin. But if He is represented in the form of a chest, with two angels sitting on each side, and a cloud hanging over it, it is the holy of holies. If God comes in the form of a dove, it is holy. But if He comes in the form of a cow, it is heathen superstition ; condemn it ! That is how the world goes.

A galaxy of true reformers in the past

Did India ever stand in want of reformers ? Do you read the history of India ? Who was Ramanuja ? Who was Shankara ? Who was Nanak ? Who was Chaitanya ? Who was Kabir ? Who was Dadu ? Who were all these great preachers, one following the other, a galaxy of stars of the first magnitude ?

Did not Ramanuja feel for the lower classes ? Did he not try all his life to admit even the Pariah to his community ? Did he not try to admit even Mohammedans to his own fold ? Did not Nanak confer Hindus and Mohammedans, and try to bring about a new state of things ? They all tried, and their work is still going on. The difference is this. They had

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not the fanfaronade of the reformers of today; they had no curses on their lips as modern reformers have; their lips pronounced only blessings.

Reformers of infinite sympathy and patience

One fact you must remember, that all the great teachers of the world have declared that they came not to destroy but to fulfil. Many times this has not been understood, and their forbearance has been thought to be an unworthy compromise with existing popular opinions. Even now, you occasionally hear that these Prophets and great teachers were rather cowardly and dared not say and do what they thought was right; but that was not so.

Fanatics little understand the infinite power of love in the hearts of these great sages who looked upon the inhabitants of this world as their children. They were the real fathers, the real gods, filled with infinite sympathy and patience for everyone; they were ready to bear and forbear. They knew how human society should grow, and patiently, slowly, surely, went on applying their remedies, not by denouncing and frightening people, but by gently and kindly leading them upwards step by step.

Such were the writers of the Upanishads. They knew full well how the old ideas of God were not reconcilable with the advanced ethical ideas of the time; they knew full well then what the atheists were preaching contained a good deal of truth, nay, great nuggets of truth; but at the same time, they understood that those who wished to sever the thread that bound the beads, who wanted to build a new society in the air, would entirely fail.

We never build anew, we simply change places; we cannot have anything new, we only change the position of things. The seed grows into the tree, patiently and gently; we must direct our energies towards the truth, and fulfil the truth that exists, not try to make new truths.

Thus, instead of denouncing these old ideas of God as unfit for modern times, the ancient sages began to seek out the reality that was in them. The result was the Vedanta philosophy, and

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out of the old deities, out of the monotheistic God, the Ruler of the universe, they found yet higher and higher ideas in what is called the Impersonal Absolute ; they found Oneness throughout the universe.

Reform is not demolition but renovation

Those reformers who preach against image-worship, or what they denounce as idolatry—to them I say, "Brothers ! If you are fit to worship God-without-form discarding all external help, do so, but why do you condemn others who cannot do the same ?"

A beautiful, large edifice, the glorious relic of a hoary antiquity has, out of neglect or disuse, fallen into a dilapidated condition ; accumulations of dirt and dust may be lying everywhere within it, may be, some portions are tumbling down to the ground. What will you do to it ? Will you take in hand the necessary cleansing and repairs and thus restore the old, or will you pull the whole edifice down to the ground and seek to build another in its place, after a sordid modern plan whose permanence has yet to be established ? We have to reform it, which truly means to make ready or perfect by necessary cleansing and repairs, not by demolishing the whole thing. There the function of reform ends.

Never can a reforming sect survive if it is only reforming ; the formative elements alone—the real impulse, that is, the principles—live on and on. After a reform has been brought about, it is the positive side that should be emphasised : After the building is finished the scaffolding must be taken away.

Why disown Hinduism ? Let us swim or sink together

The band of reformers in our country want, on the contrary, to build up a separate sect of their own. They have, however, done good work ; may the blessings of God be showered on their heads ! But why should you, Hindus, want to separate yourselves from the great common fold ? Why should you feel ashamed to take the name of Hindu, which is your greatest and most glorious possession ?

The national ship of ours, ye children of the Immortals, my countrymen, has been plying for ages, carrying civilisation and

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enriching the whole world with its inestimable treasures. For scores of shining centuries this national ship of ours has been ferrying across the ocean of life, and has taken millions of souls to the other shore, beyond all misery. But today it may have sprung a leak and got damaged, through your own fault or whatever cause it matters not. What would you, who have placed yourselves in it, do now ? Would you go about cursing it and quarrelling among yourselves ? Would you not all unite together and put your best efforts to stop the holes ? Let us all gladly give our hearts' blood to do it ; and if we fail in the attempt, let us all sink and die together with blessings and not curses on our lips.

Evil is like chronic rheumatism

Evils are plentiful in our society, but so are there evils in every other society. Here, the earth is soaked sometimes with widows' tears ; there, in the West, the air is rent with the sighs of the unmarried. Here, poverty is the great bane of life ; there, the life-weariness of luxury is the great bane that is upon the race. Here, men want to commit suicide because they have nothing to eat ; there, they commit suicide because they have so much to eat.

Evil is everywhere ; it is like chronic rheumatism. Drive it from the foot, it goes to the head ; drive it from there, it goes somewhere else. It is a question of chasing it from place to place ; that is all. Ay, children, to try to remedy evil is not the true way. Our philosophy teaches that evil and good are eternally conjoined, the obverse and the reverse of the same coin. If you have one, you must have the other ; a wave in the ocean must be at the cost of a hollow elsewhere. Nay, all life is evil. No breath can be breathed without killing some one else ; not a morsel of food can be eaten without depriving some one of it. This is the law ; this is philosophy.

Therefore the only thing we can do is to understand that all this work against evil is more subjective than objective. The work against evil is more educational than actual, however big we may talk. This, first of all, is the idea of work against evil ; and it ought to make us calmer, it ought to take fanaticism out of our blood.

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Fanatical reforms defeat their own ends

The history of the world teaches us that wherever there have been fanatical reforms, the only result has been that they have defeated their own ends. No greater upheaval for the establishment of right and liberty can be imagined than the war for the abolition of slavery in America. You all know about it. And what has been its results ? The slaves are a hundred times worse off today than they were before the abolition.

Before the abolition, these poor Negroes were the property of somebody, and, as properties, they had to be looked after, so that they might not deteriorate. Today they are the property of nobody. Their lives are of no value ; they are burnt alive on mere pretences. They are shot down without any law for their murderers ; for they are niggers, they are not human beings, they are not even animals ; and that is the effect of such violent taking away of evil by law, or by fanaticism.

The introduction of idols into India was the result of Buddha's constantly inveighing against a Personal God. The Vedas knew them not, but the reaction against the loss of God as Creator and Friend led to making idols of the great teachers, and Buddha himself became an idol and is worshipped as such by millions of people. Violent attempts at reform always end in retarding true reform.

Such is the testimony of history against every fanatical movement, even for doing good.

Where are those who want reforms ?

There is, then, another great consideration. ..... It has never been given to the masses of India to express the inner light which is their inheritance. The Occident has been rapidly advancing towards freedom for the last few centuries. In India, it was the king who used to prescribe everything, from Kulinism down to what one should eat and what one should not. In Western countries, the people do everything themselves.

.....The Indian people have not yet even the least faith in themselves, what to say of self-reliance. The faith in one's

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own Self, which is the basis of Vedanta, has not yet been even slightly carried into practice.

The whole problem of social reform, therefore, resolves itself into this : where are those who want reform ? Make them first....."There is no chance of a headache where there is no head"—where is the public ? Where are the people ?

Our country immersed in great Tamas (inertia)

Going round the whole world, I find that people of this country are immersed in great Tamas (inactivity), compared with people of other countries. On the outside, there is a simulation of the Sattvika (calm and balanced) state, but inside, downright inertness like that of stocks and stones—what work will be done in the world by such people ?

How long can such an inactive, lazy, and sensual people live in the world ? First travel in Western countries, then contradict my words. How much of enterprise and devotion to work, how much enthusiasm and manifestation of Rajas are there in the lives of the Western people ! While, in your country, it is as if the blood has become congealed in the heart, so that it cannot circulate in the veins—as if paralysis has overtaken the body and it has become languid.

Submerging of Tamas by opposite tide of Rajas needed

In India, the quality of Rajas is almost absent ; the same is the case with Sattva in the West. It is certain, therefore, that the real life of the Western world depends upon the influx, from India, of the current of Sattva or transcendentalism ; and it is also certain that unless we overpower and submerge our Tamas by the opposite tide of Rajas, we shall never gain any worldly good or welfare in this life ; and it is also equally certain that we shall meet many formidable obstacles in the path of realisation of those noble aspirations and ideals connected with our after-life.

What can be a greater giver of peace than renunciation ? A little ephemeral worldly good is nothing in comparison with eternal good ; no doubt of that. What can bring greater strength than Sattva Guna (absolute purity of mind) ? It is

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indeed true that all other kinds of knowledge are but non-knowledge in comparison with self-knowledge. But I ask: How many are there in the world fortunate enough to gain that Sattva Guna ? How many in this land of Bharata ? How many have that noble heroism which can renounce all, shaking off the idea of "I and mine" ?

How many are blessed enough to possess that far-sight of wisdom which makes the earthly pleasures appear to be but vanity of vanities ? Where is that broad-hearted man who is apt to forget even his own body in meditating over the beauty and glory of the Divine ? Those who are such are but a handful in comparison to the population of the whole of India ; and in order that these men may attain to their salvation, will the millions and millions of men and women of India have to be crushed under the wheel of the present-day society and religion ?

And what good can come out of such a crushing ?

We cannot teach the child the truth of renunciation ; the child is a born optimist ; his whole life is in his senses ; his whole life is one mass of sense-enjoyment. So there are childlike men in every society, who require a certain amount of experience of enjoyment, to see through the vanity of it, and then renunciation will come to them. There has been ample provision made for them in our Books ; but unfortunately, in later times, there has been a tendency to bind every one down by the same laws as those by which the Sannyasin is bound, and that is a great mistake. But for that, a good deal of the poverty and the misery that you see in India need not have been.

Our degradation under the spell of Tamas

Do you not see—taking up this plea of Sattva, the country has been slowly and slowly drowned in the ocean of Tamas or dark ignorance ? Where the most dull want to hide their stupidity by covering it with a false desire for the highest knowledge, which is beyond all activities, either physical or mental ; where one, born and bred in lifelong laziness, wants to throw the veil of renunciation over his own unfitness for work ; where the most diabolical try to make their cruelty appear, under the cloak of austerity, as a part of religion ; where no one has an eye upon his own incapacity, but everyone is ready to lay

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the whole blame on others ; where knowledge consists in chewing the cud of others' thoughts, and the highest glory consists in taking the name of ancestors : do we require any other proof to show that that country is being day by day drowned in utter Tamas ?

Therefore, Sattva or absolute purity is now far away from us. Those amongst us who are not yet fit, but who hope to be fit, to reach that absolutely pure Paramahamsa state—for them, the acquirement of Rajas or intense activity is what is most beneficial now. Unless a man passes through Rajas, can he ever attain to that perfect Sattvika state ? How can one expect Yoga or union with God, unless one has previously finished with his thirst for Bhoga or enjoyment ? How can renunciation come where there is no Vairagya or dispassion for all the charms of enjoyment ?

Real nation lives in cottages

Most of the reforms that have been agitated for during the past century have been ornamental. Every one of these reforms only touches the first two castes, and no other. The question of widow marriage would not touch seventy per cent of the Indian women, and all such questions only reach the higher castes of Indian people who are educated, mark you, at the expense of the masses. Every effort has been spent in cleaning their own houses. But that is no reformation. You must go down to the basis of the thing, to the very root of the matter. That is what I call radical reform. Put the fire there and let it burn upwards and make an Indian nation.

Nor is our religion to blame, for an idol more or less makes no difference. The whole defect is here : The real nation who live in cottages have forgotten their manhood, their individuality. ..... They are to be educated. .....

Their lost individuality to be restored

They are to be given ideas ; their eyes are to be opened to what is going on in the world around them, and then they will work out their own salvation. Every nation, every man, every woman, must work out one's own salvation. Give them ideas —that is the only help they require, and then the rest must follow

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as the effect. Ours is to put the chemicals together, the crystalisation comes in the law of nature. Our duty is to put ideas into their heads, they will do the rest. This is what is to be done in India.

Keep the motto before you—"Elevation of the masses without injuring their religion."

Spread of education among the masses, the only solution

From the day when education and culture, etc., began to spread gradually from patricians to plebeians, grew the distinction between the modern civilisation as of Western countries, and the ancient civilisation as of India, Egypt, Rome, etc. I see it before my eyes, a nation is advanced in proportion as education and intelligence spread among the masses.

The chief cause of India's ruin has been the monopolising of the whole education and intelligence of the land, by dint of pride and royal authority, among a handful of men. If we are to rise again, we shall have to do it in the same way, i.e., by spreading education among the masses.

Through education comes faith in one's own Self

How many sepoys were brought by the Mussulmans ? How many Englishmen are there ? Where, except in India, can be had millions of men who will cut the throats of their own fathers and brothers for six rupees ? Sixty millions of Mussulmans in seven hundred years of Mohammedan rule, and two millions of Christians in one hundred years of Christian rule—what makes it so ?

Why has originality entirely forsaken the country ? Why are our deft-fingered artisans daily becoming extinct, unable to compete with the Europeans ? By what power again has the German labourer succeeded in shaking the many-century-grounded firm footing of the English labourer ?

Education, education, education alone ! Travelling through many cities of Europe and observing in them the comforts and education of even the poor people, there was brought to my mind the state of our own poor people, and I used to shed tears. What made the difference ? Education was the

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answer I got. Through education comes faith in one's own Self.

If you have faith in all the three hundred and thirty millions of your mythological gods, and in all the gods which foreigners have now and again introduced into your midst, and still have no faith in yourselves, there is no salvation for you. Have faith in yourselves, and stand up on that faith and be strong ; that is what we need.

That activity and self-reliance must come in the people of the country in time—I see it clearly. There is no escape. The intelligent man can distinctly see the vision of the next three Yugas ahead. Ever since the advent of Shri Ramakrishna the eastern horizon has been aglow with the dawning rays of the sun which in course of time will illumine the country with the splendour of the midday sun.

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TO THOSE ENTERING THE ARENA OF REGENERATION WORK

India will be raised, not with the power of the flesh, but with the power of the spirit ; not with the flag of destruction, but with the flag of peace and love, the garb of the Sannyasin. . . . .

Call up the divinity within you, which will enable you to bear hunger and thirst, heat and cold. Sitting in luxurious homes, surrounded with all the comforts of life, and doling out a little amateur religion may be good for other lands, but India has a truer instinct. It intuitively detects the mask. You must give up. Be great. No great work can be done without sacrifice. . . . .

Lay down your comforts, your pleasures, your name, fame or position, nay even your lives, and make a bridge of human chains over which millions will cross this ocean of life. Bring all the forces of good together. Do not care under what banner you march. Do not care what be your colour—green, blue, or red—but mix all the colours up and produce that intense glow of white, the colour of love. Ours is to work. The results will take care of themselves.

I do not see into the future ; nor do I care to see. But one vision I see clear as life before me, that the ancient Mother has awakened once more, sitting on her throne rejuvenated, more glorious than ever. Proclaim her to all the world with the voice of peace and benediction.

●

Three prerequisites for a true reformer :
First : Feel from the heart.

If you wish to be a true reformer, three things are necessary. The first is to feel.

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First, feel from the heart. What is in the intellect or reason ? It goes a few steps and there it stops. But through the heart comes inspiration.....It is the heart that is of most importance. It is through the heart that the Lord is seen, and not through the intellect. The intellect is only the street-cleaner, cleansing the path for us, a secondary worker, the policeman ; but the policeman is not a positive necessity for the workings of society. He is only to stop disturbances, to check wrong-doing, and that is all the work required of the intellect. The intellect is blind and cannot move of itself, it has neither hands nor feet. It is feeling that works, that moves with speed infinitely superior to that of electricity or anything else. Do you feel ? —that is the question.

Intellect is necessary, for without it we fall into crude errors and make all sorts of mistakes. Intellect checks these ; but beyond that, do not try to build anything upon it. It is an inactive, secondary help ; the real help is feeling, love.

Love opens the most impossible gates

Love opens the most impossible gates ; love is the gate to all the secrets of the universe. Feel, therefore, my would-be reformers, my would-be patriots ! Do you feel ? Do you feel that millions and millions of the descendants of gods and of sages have become next-door neighbours to brutes ? Do you feel that millions are starving today, and millions have been starving for ages ? Do you feel that ignorance has come over the land as a dark cloud ? Does it make you restless ? Does it make you sleepless ? Has it gone into your blood, coursing through your veins, becoming consonant with your heart-beats ? Has it made you almost mad ? Are you seized with that one idea of the misery of ruin, and have you forgotten all about your name, your fame, your wives, your children, your property, even your own bodies ?

Deep sympathy—the greatest need

Who feels there for the two hundred millions of men and women sunken for ever in poverty and ignorance ? They have forgotten that they too are men. And the result is slavery. Thoughtful people within the last few years have seen it, but

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unfortunately laid it at the door of the Hindu religion, and to them, the only way of bettering is by crushing this grandest religion of the world. Hear me,.....I have discovered the secret through the grace of the Lord. Religion is not in fault.

On the other hand, your religion teaches you that every being is only your own self multiplied. But it was the want of practical application, the want of sympathy—the want of heart. The Lord once more came to you as Buddha and taught you how to feel, how to sympathise with the poor, the miserable, the sinner, but you heard Him not.

No religion on earth preaches the dignity of humanity in such a lofty strain as Hinduism, and no religion on earth treads upon the necks of the poor and the low in such a fashion as Hinduism. The Lord has shown me that religion is not in fault, but it is the Pharisees and Sadducees in Hinduism, hypocrites, who invent all sorts of engines of tyranny in the shape of doctrines of Paramarthika and Vyavaharika.

Serve with a physician's heart

Despair not ; remember the Lord says in the Gita,

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन। (*Gita II-47*)

"To work you have the right, but not to the result." Gird up your loins,....I am called by the Lord for this. I have been dragged through a whole life full of crosses and tortures, I have seen the nearest and dearest die, almost of starvation ; I have been ridiculed, distrusted, and have suffered for my sympathy for the very men who scoff and scorn. Well,.....this is the school of misery, which is also the school for great souls and prophets for the cultivation of sympathy, of patience, and, above all, of an indomitable iron will which quakes not even if the universe be pulverised at our feet.

I pity them. It is not their fault. They are children, veritable children, though they be great and high in society. Their eyes see nothing beyond their little horizon of a few yards —the routine-work, eating, drinking, earning, and begetting, following each other in mathematical precision. They know

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nothing beyond, happy little souls ! Their sleep is never disturbed.

Their nice little brown studies of lives never rudely shocked by the wail of woe, of misery, of degradation, and poverty, that has filled the Indian atmosphere—the result of centuries of oppression. They little dream of the ages of tyranny, mental, moral, and physical, that has reduced the image of God to a mere beast of burden ; the emblem of the Divine Mother, to a slave to bear children ; and life itself, a curse.

Can you put life into this dead mass—dead to almost all moral aspiration, dead to all future possibilities—and always ready to spring upon those that would try to do good to them ? Can you take the position of a physician who tries to pour medicine down the throat of a kicking and refractory child ?....

I heard in Japan that it was the belief of the girls of that country that their dolls would be animated if they were loved with all their heart. The Japanese girl never breaks her doll. O you of great fortune ! I too believe that India will awake again if anyone could love with all his heart the people of the country—bereft of the grace of affluence, of blasted fortune, their discretion totally lost, downtrodden, ever-starved, quarrelsome and envious. Then only will India awake, when hundreds of large-hearted men and women, giving up all desires of enjoying the luxuries of life, will long and exert themselves to their utmost, for the well-being of the millions of their countrymen who are gradually sinking lower and lower in the vortex of destitution and ignorance.

Second : You must know the remedy

Are you full of that idea of sympathy ? If you are, that is only the first step. You must think next if you have found any remedy. The old ideas may be all superstition, but in and around these masses of superstition are nuggets of gold and truth. Have you discovered means by which to keep that gold alone, without any of the dross ?

Third : Your motives should be pure and your will indomitable

.....Instead of spending your energies in frothy talk, have you found any way out, any practical solution, some help

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instead of condemnation, some sweet words to soothe their miseries, to bring them out of this living death ?

If you have done that, that is only the second step ; one more thing is necessary. What is your motive ? Are you sure that you are not actuated by greed of gold, by thirst for fame or power ?

Yet that is not all. Have you got the will to surmount mountain-high obstructions ? If the whole world stands against you sword in hand, would you still dare to do what you think is right ? If your wives and children are against you, if all your money goes, your name dies, your wealth vanishes, would you still stick to it ? Would you still pursue it and go on steadily towards your own goal ? As the great King Bhartrihari says,

निन्दन्तु नीतिनिपुणा यदि वा स्तुवन्तु ।
लक्ष्मीः समाविशतु गच्छतु वा यथेष्टम् ॥
अद्यैव वा मरणमस्तु युगान्तरे वा ।
न्याय्यात्पथः प्रविचलन्ति पदं न धीराः ॥

(*Bhartrihari—Nitishatak*)

"Let the sages blame or let them praise ; let the goddess of fortune come or let her go wherever she likes ; let death come today, or let it come in hundreds of years ; he indeed is the steady man who does not move one inch from the way of truth." Have you got that steadfastness ?

If you have these three things, each one of you will work miracles. You need not write in the newspapers, you need not go about lecturing, your very face will shine. If you live in a cave, your thoughts will permeate even through the rock walls, will go vibrating all over the world for hundreds of years, may be, until they will fasten on to some brain, and work out there. Such is the power of thought, of sincerity, and of purity of purpose.

Take a vow to devote your lives for the cause

It is not the work of a day, and the path is full of the most deadly thorns. But Parthasarathi is ready to be our Sarathi, we know that, and in His name and with enternal faith in Him,

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set fire to the mountain of misery that has been heaped upon India for ages—and it shall be burned down.

Go to the temple of Parthasarathi, and before Him who was friend to the poor and lowly cowherds of Gokula, who never shrank to embrace the Pariah Guhaka, who accepted the invitation of a prostitute in preference to that of the nobles and saved her in His incarnation as Buddha—yea, down on your faces before Him, and make a great sacrifice, the sacrifice of a whole life for them, for whom He comes from time to time, whom He loves above all, the poor, the lowly, the oppressed. Vow, then, to devote your whole lives to the cause of the redemption of these three hundred millions, going down and down every day.

Faith

Come then, look it in the face, brethren, it is a grand task, and we are so low. But we are the sons of Light and children of God. Glory unto the Lord, we will succeed. Hundreds will fall in the struggle, hundreds will be ready to take it up. I may die here unsuccessful, another will take up the task. You know the disease, you know the remedy, only have faith. Do not look up to the so-called rich and great ; do not care for the heartless intellectual writers, and their cold-blooded newspaper articles. Faith, sympathy—fiery faith and fiery sympathy ! Faith, faith, faith in ourselves, faith, faith in God—this is the secret of greatness.

Let Nachiketa's Shraddhaa enter into your heart

He is an atheist who does not believe in himself. Those of you who have studied that most beautiful of all the Upanishads, the Katha, will remember how the king was going to make a great sacrifice, and, instead of giving away things that were of any worth, he was giving away cows and horses that were not of any use, and the book says that at that time Shraddhaa entered into the heart of his son Nachiketa. I would not translate this word Shraddhaa to you, it would be a mistake ; it is a wonderful word to understand, and much depends on it ; we will see how it works, for immediately we find Nachiketa

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telling himself, बहूनामेमि प्रथमो बहूनामेमि मध्यमः ।
किं स्विद्यमस्य कर्तव्यं यन्मयाऽद्य करिष्यति ॥

(*Katha Up.* 1.1.5)

"I am superior to many, I am inferior to few, but nowhere am I the last, I can also do something."

And this boldness increased, and the boy wanted to solve the problem which was in his mind, the problem of death. The solution could only be got by going to the house of Death, and the boy went. There he was, brave Nachiketa, waiting at the house of Death for three days, and you know how he obtained what he desired.

This Shraddhaa must enter into you. Whatever of material power you see manifested by the Western races is the outcome of this Shraddhaa because they believe in their muscles, and if you believe in your spirit, how much more will it work !

.. This Shraddhaa is what I want, and what all of us here want, this faith in ourselves, and before you is the great task to get that faith. Give up the awful disease that is creeping into our national blood, that idea of ridiculing everything, that loss of seriousness. Give that up. Be strong and have this Shraddhaa, and everything else is bound to follow.

Renunciation

Put yourself to work, and you will find such tremendous power coming to you that you will feel it hard to bear. Even the least work done for others awakens the power within ; even thinking the least good of others gradually instils into the heart the strength of a lion.

The essential thing is renunciation. Without renunciation none can pour out his whole heart in working for others. The man of renunciation sees all with an equal eye and devotes himself to the service of all.

Worship through service

Have Vairagya. Your ancestors gave up the world for doing great things. At the present time there are men who give up the world to help their own salvation. Throw away everything, even your own salvation, and go and help others.

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Let all other vain gods disappear for the time from our minds. This is the only god that is awake, our own race, everywhere his hands, everywhere his feet, everywhere his ears, he covers everything. All other gods are sleeping. *What vain gods shall we go after and yet cannot worship the god we see all round us, the Virat ? When we have worshipped this, we shall be able to worship all other gods.*

Liberation is only for him who gives up everything for others, whereas others who tax their brains day and night harping on "my salvation", "my salvation", wander about with their true well-being ruined, both present and prospective.

What is needed is Chittashuddhi, purification of the heart. And how does that come ? The first of all worship is the worship of the Virat—of those all around us. Worship it. Worship is the exact equivalent of the Sanskrit word, and no other English word will do. These are all our gods—men and animals ; and the first gods we have to worship are our countrymen.

Men of renunciation and service—need of the hour

The national ideals of India are *renunciation* and *service.* Intensify her in those channels, and the rest will take care of itself. The banner of the spiritual cannot be raised too high in this country. In it alone is salvation.

.... What I want is muscles of iron and nerves of steel, inside which dwells a mind of the same material as that of which the thunderbolt is made. Strength, manhood, Kshatra-Virya Brahma-Teja. Our beautiful hopeful boys—they have everything only if they are not slaughtered by the millions at the alter of this brutality they call marriage. O Lord, hear my wails !

Let a few stand out and live for God alone and save religion for the world. Do not pretend to be like Janaka when you are only the "progenitor" of delusions. (The name Janaka means "progenitor" and belonged to a king who, although he still held his kingdom for the sake of his people, had given up everything mentally.) Be honest and say, "I see the ideal but I cannot yet approach it" ; but do not pretend to give up when you do not. If you give up, stand fast. If a hundred fall in the fight, seize the flag and carry it on. God is true for all that, no matter who

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fails. Let him who falls, hand on the flag to another to carry on ; it can never fall.

A hundred thousand men and women, fired with the zeal of holiness, fortified with eternal faith in the Lord, and nerved to lion's courage by their sympathy for the poor and the fallen and the downtrodden, will go over the length and breadth of the land, preaching the gospel of salvation, the gospel of help, the gospel of social raising-up—the gospel of equality.

Enter the arena as servants of the Lord

Again and again has our country fallen into a swoon, as it were, and again and again has India's Lord, by the manifestation of Himself, revivified her.

The dead never return ; the past night does not reappear ; a spent-up tidal wave does not rise anew ; neither does man inhabit the same body over again. So from the worship of the dead past, O man, we invite you to the worship of the living present, from the regretful brooding over bygones, we invite you to the activities of the present ; from the waste of energy in retracing lost and demolished pathways, we call you back to broad new-laid highways lying very near. He that is wise, let him understand.

Of that power, which at the very first impulse has roused distant echoes from all the four quarters of the globe, conceive in your mind the manifestation in its fullness ; and discarding all idle misgivings, weaknesses, and the jealousies characteristic of enslaved peoples, come and help in the turning of this mighty wheel of new dispensation !

With the conviction firmly rooted in your heart that you are the servants of the Lord, his children, helpers in the fulfilment of his purposes, enter the arena of work.

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THE TASK OF REGENERATION—1
GROUND WORK

May He who is the creator, the preserver, and the protector of our race, the God of our forefathers, whether called by the name of Vishnu, or Shiva, or Shakti, or Ganapati, whether He is worshipped as Saguna or as Nirguna, whether He is worshipped as personal or as impersonal, may He who our forefathers knew and addressed by the words, एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति—"That which exists is One ; sages call Him by various names"—May He enter into us with His mighty love, may He shower His blessings on us, may He make us understand each other, may He make us work for each other with real love, with intense love for truth, and may not the least desire for our own personal fame, our own personal prestige, our own personal advantage, enter into this great work of the spiritual regeneration of India !

●

We must compare notes with the world outside

In the remote past, our country made gigantic advances in spiritual ideas. Let us, today, bring before our mind's eye that ancient history. But the one great danger in meditating over long-past greatness is that we cease to exert ourselves for new things, and content ourselves with vegetating upon that by-gone ancestral glory, and priding ourselves upon it. We should guard against that.

With all my love for India, and with all my patriotism, and veneration for the ancients, I cannot but think that we have to

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learn many things from other nations. We must be always ready to sit at the feet of all, for mark you, every one can teach us great lessons. At the same time we must not forget that we have also to teach a great lesson to the world.

We cannot do without the world outside India ; it was our foolishness that we thought we could, and we have paid the penalty by about a thousand years of slavery. That we did not go out to compare things with other nations, did not mark the workings that have been all around us, has been the one great cause of this degradation of the Indian mind. We have paid the penalty ; let us do it no more.

All such foolish ideas, that Indians must not go out of India, are childish. They must be knocked on the head ; the more you go out and travel among the nations of the world, the better for you and for your country. If you had done that for hundreds of years past, you would not be here today, at the feet of every nation that wants to rule India.

You must expand if you want to live

The first manifest effect of life is expansion. You must expand if you want to live. The moment you have ceased to expand, death is upon you, danger is ahead. I went to America and Europe .. ; I had to, because that is the first sign of the revival of national life, expansion. This reviving national life, expanding inside, threw me off, and thousands will be thrown off in that way. Mark my words, it has got to come if this nation lives at all. This question, therefore, is the greatest of the signs of the revival of national life, and through this expansion our quota of offering to the general mass of human knowledge, our contribution to the general upheaval of the world, is going out to the external world.

Again, this is not a new thing. Those of you who think that the Hindus have been always confined within the four walls of their country through all ages, are entirely mistaken ; you have not studied the old books, you have not studied the history of the race aright if you think so.

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When you give life, you will have life

Each nation must give in order to live. When you give life, you will have life ; when you receive, you must pay for it by giving to all others ; and that we have been living for so many thousands of years is a fact that stares us in the face, and the solution that remains is that we have been always giving to the outside world, whatever the ignorant may think. But the gift of India is the gift of religion and philosophy, and wisdom and spirituality.

Therefore we must go out, exchange our spirituality for anything they have to give us ; for the marvels of the region of spirit we will exchange the marvels of the region of matter. We will not be students always, but teachers also. There cannot be friendship without equality, and there cannot be equality when one party is always the teacher and the other party sits always at his feet. If you want to become equal with the Englishman or the American, you will have to teach as well as to learn and you have plenty yet to teach to the world for centuries to come.

We have many things to learn from the West

If we want to rise, we must also remember that we have many things to learn from the West. We should learn from the West her arts and her sciences.

This spirituality, then, is what you have to teach the world. .. We have, perhaps, to gain a little in material knowledge, in the power of organisation, in the ability to handle powers, organising powers, in bringing the best results out of the smallest of causes.

Imitation is not civilization

Imitation is not civilization, this is another great lesson we have to remember. I may deck myself out in a Raja's dress, but will that make me a Raja ? An ass in a lion's skin never makes a lion. Imitation, cowardly imitation, never makes for progress. It is verily the sign of awful degradation in a man. Ay, when a man has begun to hate himself, then the last blow has come.

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Pride in being a Hindu

When a man has begun to be ashamed of his ancestors, the end has come. Here am I, one of the least of the Hindu race, yet proud of my race, proud of my ancestors. I am proud to call myself a Hindu, I am proud that I am one of your unworthy servants. I am proud that I am a countryman of yours, you the descendants of the sages, you the descendants of the most glorious Rishis the world ever saw.

Receive, but mould it after your fashion

Therefore have faith in yourselves, be proud of your ancestors, instead of being ashamed of them. And do not imitate, do not imitate ! Whenever you are under the thumb of others, you lose your own independence. If you are working, even in spiritual things, at the dictation of others, slowly you lose all faculty, even of thought. Bring out through your own exertions what you have, but do not imitate, yet take what is good from others. We have to learn from others.

You put the seed in the ground, and give it plenty of earth, and air, and water to feed upon ; when the seed grows into the plant, and into a gigantic tree, does it become the earth, does it become the air, or does it become the water ? It becomes the mighty plant, the mighty tree, after its own nature, having absorbed everything that was given to it. Let that be your position.

Learn good things from everywhere

We have indeed many things to learn from others, yea, that man who refuses to learn is already dead. Declares our Manu :

आददीत परां विद्यां प्रयत्नादवरादपि ।
अन्त्यादपि परं धर्मं स्त्रीरत्नं दुष्कुलादपि ॥ (*Manu, II. 238*)

"Take the jewel of a woman for your wife, though she be of inferior descent. Learn supreme knowledge with service, even from the man of low birth ; and even from the Chandala, learn by serving him, the way to salvation".

Learn everything that is good from others, but bring it in, and in your own way absorb it ; do not become others. Do

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not be dragged away out of this Indian life ; do not for a moment think that it would be better for India if all the Indians dressed, ate, and behaved like another race.

Let the life-current flow unobstructed

You know the difficulty of giving up a habit of a few years. The Lord knows how many thousands of years are in your blood ; this national specialised life has been flowing in one way, the Lord knows for how many thousands of years ; and do you mean to say that that mighty stream, which has nearly reached its ocean, can go back to the snows of its Himalayas again ? That is impossible ! The struggle to do so would only break it.

Therefore, make way for the life-current of the nation. Take away the blocks that bar the way to the progress of this mighty river, cleanse its path, clear the channel, and out it will rush by its own natural impulse, and the nation will go on careering and progressing.

We Indians, .. have been invaded by a vast amount of foreign ideas that are eating into the very vitals of our national religion. Why are we so backward nowadays ? Why are ninety-nine per cent of us made up of entirely foreign ideas and elements ? This has to be thrown out if we want to rise in the scale of nations.

Let us blame none, let us blame our own Karma

Ay, my friends, I must tell you a few harsh truths. I read in the newspaper how, when one of our fellows is murdered or ill-treated by an Englishman, howls go up all over the country ; I read and I weep, and the next moment comes to my mind the question : Who is responsible for it all ? As a Vedantist I cannot but put that question to myself. The Hindu is a man of introspection ; he wants to see things in and through himself, through the subjective vision. I, therefore, ask myself : Who is responsible ? And the answer comes every time : Not the English ; no, they are not responsible ; it is we who are responsible for all our misery and all our degradation, and we alone are responsible.

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We, as Vedantists, know for certain that there is no power in the universe to injure us unless we first injure ourselves. One-fifth of the population of India have become Mohammedans. .. Christians are already more than a million.

Whose fault is it ? .. The question is : What did we do for these people who forsook their own religion ? Why should they have become Mohammedans ?

We are weeping for these renegades now, but what did we do for them before ? Let every one of us ask ourselves, what have we learnt ; have we taken hold of the torch of truth, and if so, how far did we carry it ? We did not help them then. This is the question we should ask ourselves. That we did not do so was our own fault, our own Karma. Let us blame none, let us blame our own Karma.

Disease attacks only a weak body

Materialism, or Mohammedanism, or Christianity, or any other *ism* in the world could never have succeeded but that you allowed them. No bacilli can attack the human frame until it is degraded and degenerated by vice, bad food, privation, and exposure ; the healthy man passes scatheless through masses of poisonous bacilli.

.... We know that there must be two causes to produce a disease, some poison germ outside, and the state of the body. Until the body is in a state to admit the germs, until the body is degraded to a lower vitality so that the germs may enter and thrive and multiply, there is no power in any germ in the world to produce a disease in the body. In fact, millions of germs are continually passing through everyone's body ; but so long as it is vigorous it never is conscious of them. It is only when the body is weak that these germs take possession of it and produce disease. Just so with the national life.

It is when the national body is weak that all sorts of disease germs, in the political state of the race or in its social state, in its educational or intellectual state, crowd into the system and produce disease. To remedy it, therefore, we must go to the root of this disease and cleanse the blood of all impurities. The one tendency will be to strengthen the man, to make the blood

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pure, the body vigorous, so that it will be able to resist and throw off all external poisons.

Brethren, we know to our shame, that most of the real evils for which the foreign races abuse the Hindu nation are only owing to us. We have been the cause of bringing many undeserved calumnies on the head of the other races in India.

Ludicrous state of affairs

To what a ludicrous state are we brought! If a Bhangi comes to anybody as a Bhangi, he would be shunned as the plague; but no sooner does he get a cupful of water poured upon his head with some mutterings of prayers by a Padri, and get a coat on his back, no matter how threadbare, and come into the room of the most orthodox Hindu, I don't see the man who then dare refuse him a chair and a hearty shake of the hands: Irony can go no further.

Think of the last six hundred or seven hundred years of degradation, when grown-up men by the hundreds have been discussing for years whether we should drink a glass of water with the right hand or the left, whether the hand should be washed three times or four times. ... ...

Imbecility

Those whose heads have a tendency to be troubled day and night over such questions as whether the bell should ring on the right or on the left, whether the sandal-paste mark should be put on the head or anywhere else, whether the light should be waved twice or four times—simply deserve the name of wretches. ... Those into whose heads nothing but that sort of silliness enters are called imbecile..... It is owing to that sort of notion that we are the outcasts of Fortune, kicked and spurned at, while the people of the West are masters of the whole world. .....

Loss of originality, vigour and activity

What can you expect from men who pass their lives in discussing such momentous questions as these, and writing most learned philosophies on them!

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..... "If a potato happens to touch a brinjal, how long will the universe last before it is deluged ?" "If they do not apply earth a dozen times to clean their hands, will fourteen generations of ancestors go to hell, or twenty-four ?"—For intricate problems like these they have been finding out scientific explanations for the last two thousand years—while one-fourth of the people are starving.

A girl of eight is married to a man of thirty and the parents are jubilant over it. And if anyone protests against it, the plea is put forward, "Our religion is being overturned". What sort of religion have they who want to see their girls becoming mothers before they attain puberty even, and offer scientific explanations for it ? Many, again, lay the blame at the door of the Mohammedans. They are to blame, indeed !

There is a danger of our religion getting into the kitchen. We are neither Vedantists, most of us now, nor Pauranics, nor Tantrics. We are just "Don't-touchists". Our religion is in the kitchen. Our God is the cooking-pot, and our religion is "Don't touch me, I am holy". If this goes on for another century, every one of us will be in a lunatic asylum.

It is a sure sign of softening of the brain when the mind cannot grasp the higher problems of life ; all originality is lost, the mind has lost all its strength, its activity, and its power of thought, and just tries to go round and round the smallest curve it can find.

Steer clear of superstitious orthodoxy and new-fangled materialism

We have to find our way between the Scylla of old superstitious orthodoxy, and the Charybdis of materialism—of Europeanism. .....

There is the man today who after drinking the cup of Western wisdom, thinks that he knows everything. He laughs at the ancient sages. All Hindu thought to him is arrant trash—philosophy mere child's prattle, and religion the superstition of fools.

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On the other hand, there is the man educated, but a sort of monomaniac, who runs to the other extreme, and wants to explain the omen of this and that. He has philosophical and metaphysical, and Lord knows what other puerile explanations for every superstition that belongs to his peculiar race, or his peculiar gods, or his peculiar village. Every little village superstition is to him a mandate of the Vedas, and upon the carrying out of it, according to him, depends the national life. You must beware of this.

That brain which cannot think high and noble thoughts, which has lost all power of originality, which has lost all vigour, that brain which is always poisoning itself with all sorts of little superstitions passing under the name of religion, we must beware of.

Mystery mongering and superstitions—signs of weakness

Mystery mongering and superstitions are always signs of weakness. These are always signs of degradation and of death. Therefore beware of them ; be strong and stand on your own feet. Great things are there, most marvellous things. We may call them supernatural things so far as our ideas of nature go, but not one of these things is a mystery.

It was never preached on this soil that the truths of religion were mysteries or that they were the property of secret societies sitting on the snow-caps of the Himalayas.

Weed out superstitions from pure religion

These mysterious societies do not exist anywhere. Do not run after these superstitions. Better for you and for the race that you become rank atheists, because you would have strength, but these are degradation and death. Shame on humanity that strong men should spend their time on these superstitions, spend all their time in inventing allegories to explain the most rotten superstitions of the world. Be bold ; do not try to explain everything that way.

The fact is that we have many superstitions, many bad spots and sores on our body—these have to be excised, cut off, and destroyed—but these do not destroy our religion, our national life, our spirituality. Every principle of religion is safe, and the

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sooner these black spots are purged away, the better the principles will shine, the more gloriously. Stick to them.

Physical weakness

.... In spite of the greatness of the Upanishads, in spite of our boasted ancestry of sages, compared to many other races, I must tell you that we are weak, very weak. First of all is our physical weakness. That physical weakness is the cause of at least one-third of our miseries. We are lazy, we cannot work. ..

First of all, our young men must be strong. Religion will come afterwards. Be strong, my young friends ; that is my advice to you. You will be nearer to Heaven through football than through the study of the Gita. These are bold words ; but I have to say them, for I love you.

You will understand Gita better with your biceps stronger

I know where the shoe pinches. I have gained a little experience. You will understand the Gita better with your biceps, your muscles, a little stronger. You will understand the mighty genius and the mighty strength of Krishna better with a little of strong blood in you. You will understand the Upanishads better and the glory of the Atman when your body stands firm upon your feet, and you feel yourselves as men.

We speak of many things parrot-like, but never do them ; speaking and not doing has become a habit with us. What is the cause of that ? Physical weakness. This sort of weak brain is not able to do anything ; we must strengthen it.

What we want is vigour in the blood, strength in the nerves, iron muscles and nerves of steel, not softening namby-pamby ideas.

Quarrelling with brothers and kneeling before foreigners

There is yet another defect in us ..... Through centuries of slavery, we have become like a nation of women. You scarcely can get three women together for five minutes in this country, or any other country, but they quarrel. Women make big societies in European countries, and make tremendous declarations of women's power and so on ; then they quarrel,

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and some man comes and rules them all. All over the world they still require some man to rule them.

We are like them. Women we are. If a woman comes to lead women they all begin immediately to criticise her, tear her to pieces, and make her sit down. If a man comes and gives them a little harsh treatment, scolds them now and then, it is all right, they have been used to that sort of mesmerism.

In the same way, if one of our countrymen stands up and tries to become great, we all try to hold him down, but if a foreigner comes and tries to kick us, it is all right. We have been used to it, have we not ?

Mutual jealousy—our crying sin

..... We cannot combine, we do not love each other ; we are intensely selfish, not three of us can come together without hating each other, without being jealous of each other.

Ay, for ages we have been saturated with awful jealousy ; we are always getting jealous of each other. Why has this man a little precedence, and not I ? Even in the worship of God we want precedence, to such a state of slavery have we come.

Give up that hateful malice, that dog-like bickering and barking at one another, and take your stand on good purpose, right means, righteous courage, and be brave.

Let us wipe off first that mark which nature always puts on the forehead of a slave—the stain of jealousy. Be jealous of none. Be ready to lend a hand to every worker of good. Send a good thought for every being in the three worlds.

Jealousy the greatest impediment in the building up of organised work

Three things are necessary to make every man great, every nation great :

1. Conviction of the powers of goodness.
2. Absence of jealousy and suspicion.
3. Helping all who are trying to be and do good.

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Why should the Hindu Nation with all its wonderful intelligence and other things have gone to pieces ? I would answer you, *Jealousy*. Never were there people more wretchedly jealous of one another, more envious of one another's fame and name than this wretched Hindu race. And if you ever come out in the West, the absence of this is the first feeling which you will see in the Western nations.

Three men cannot act in concert together in India for five minutes. Each one struggles for power and in the long run the whole organisation comes to grief.

Secret of power lies in unity and organisation

.....Before my mind rises one of the marvellous verses of the Atharva-Veda Samhita which says,

संगच्छध्वं सवदध्वं सं वो मनांसि जानताम् ।
देवा भागं यथा पूर्वे संजानानामुपासते ॥

(*Atharva-Kand* 1)

"Be thou all of one mind, be thou all of one thought, for in the days of yore, the gods being of one mind were enabled to receive oblations. That the gods can be worshipped by men is because they are of one mind." Being of one mind is the secret of society.

Why is it, to take a case in point, that forty millions of Englishmen rule three hundred millions of people here ? What is the psychological explanation ? These forty millions put their wills together and that means infinite power, and you three hundred millions have a will each separate from the other. *Therefore to make a great future India, the whole secret lies in organisation, accumulation of power, co-ordination of wills.*

And the more you go on fighting and quarrelling about all trivialities such as "Dravidian" and "Aryan", and the question of Brahmins and non-Brahmins and all that, the further you are off from that accumulation of energy and power which is going to make the future India. For mark you, the future India depends entirely upon that. That is the secret—accumulation of will-power, co-ordination, bringing them all, as it were, into one focus.

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We have to build up on the common ground of religion

The problems in India are more complicated, more momentous, than the problems in any other country. Race, religion, language, government—all these together make a nation.

The one common ground that we have is our sacred tradition, our religion. That is the only common ground, and upon that we shall have to build. In Europe, political ideas form the national unity.

The unity in religion, therefore, is absolutely necessary as the first condition of the future of India. There must be the recognition of one religion throughout the length and breadth of this land. What do I mean by one religion ? Not in the sense of one religion as held among the Christians, or the Mohammedans, or the Buddhists.

Bring out life-giving common principles

We know that our religion has certain common grounds, common to all our sects, however varying their conclusions may be, however different their claims may be. So there are certain common grounds ; and within their limitations this religion of ours admits of a marvellous variation, and infinite amount of liberty to think and live our own lives.

.....What we want is to bring out these life-giving common principles of our religion, and let every man, woman, and child, throughout the length and breadth of this country, understand them, know them, and try to bring them out in their lives. This is the first step ; and, therefore, it has to be taken.

Unifying power of religion

We see how in Asia, and especially in India, race difficulties, linguistic difficulties, social difficulties, national difficulties, all melt away before this unifying power of religion. We know that to the Indian mind there is nothing higher than religious ideals, that this is the key-note of Indian life, and we can only work in the line of least resistance.

It is not only true that the ideal of religion is the highest ideal, in the case of India it is the only possible means of work ; work

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in any other line, without first strengthening this, would be disastrous. Therefore, the first plank in the making of a future India, the first step that is to be hewn out of that rock of ages, is this unification of religion.

Gathering up of scattered spiritual forces

All of us have to be taught that we Hindus—dualists, qualified monists, or monists, Shaivas, Vaishnavas, or Pashupatas—to whatever denomination we may belong, have certain common ideas behind us, and that the time has come when for the well-being of ourselves, for the well-being of our race, we must give up all our little quarrels and differences.

Be sure these quarrels are entirely wrong; they are condemned by our scriptures, forbidden by our forefathers; and those great men from whom we claim our descent, whose blood is in our veins, look down with contempt on their children quarrelling about minute differences.

National union in India must be a gathering up of its scattered spiritual forces. A Nation in India must be a union of those whose hearts beat to the same spiritual tune.

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THE TASK OF REGENERATION—2
THE PLAN OF ACTION

Says Vyasa : Giving alone is the one work in this Kali Yuga ; and of all the gifts, giving spiritual life is the highest gift possible ; the next gift is secular knowledge ; the next, saving of life of man ; and the last, giving food to the needy.

Of food we have given enough ; no nation is more charitable than we. So long as there is a piece of bread in the home of the beggar, he will give half of it. Such a phenomenon can be observed only in India. We have enough of that, let us go for the other two, the gifts of spiritual and secular knowledge.

And if we were all brave and had stout hearts, and with absolute sincerity put our shoulders to the wheel, in twenty-five years the whole problem would be solved, and there would be nothing left here to fight about ; the whole Indian world would be once more Aryan.

●

The four gifts

Praise be to Vyasa, the great author of the Mahabharata, that in this Kali Yuga there is one great work. The Tapas and the other hard Yogas that were practised in other Yugas do not work now. What is needed in this Yuga is giving, helping others.

What is meant by Dana ? The highest of gifts is the giving of spiritual knowledge, the next is the giving of secular knowledge, and the next is the saving of life, the last is giving food and drink.

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He who gives spiritual knowledge, saves the soul from many and many a birth. He who gives secular knowledge, opens the eyes of human beings towards spiritual knowledge, and far below these rank all other gifts, even the saving of life. Therefore, it is necessary that you learn this, and note that all other kinds of work are of much less value than that of imparting spiritual knowledge.

He who gives man spiritual knowledge is the greatest benefactor of mankind and as such we always find that those were the most powerful of men who helped man in his spiritual needs, because spirituality is the true basis of all our activities in life. A spiritually strong and sound man will be strong in every other respect, if he so wishes. Until there is spiritual strength in man even physical needs cannot be well satisfied.

SPREAD OF RELIGION OR SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE

The first charity

In this land of charity, let us take up the energy of the first charity, the diffusion of spiritual knowledge. And that diffusion should not be confined within the bounds of India ; it must go out all over the world. This has been the custom.

Those that tell you that Indian thought never went outside of India, those that tell you that I am the first Sannyasin who went to foreign lands to preach, do not know the history of their own race. Again and again this phenomenon has happened. Whenever the world has required it, this perennial flood of spirituality has overflowed and deluged the world.

Religion must be brought free to every door

Religion for a long time has come to be static in India. What we want is to make it dynamic. I want it to be brought into the life of everybody. Religion, as it always has been

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in the past, must enter the palaces of kings as well as the homes of the poorest peasants in the land.

Religion, the common inheritance, the universal birth-right of the race, must be brought free to the door of everybody. Religion in India must be made as free and as easy of access as is God's air. And this is the kind of work we have to bring about in India, but not by getting up little sects and fighting on points of difference. Let us preach where we all agree.....

Give the truth, and the false must vanish

.....If there is the darkness of centuries in a room, and we go into the room and begin to cry, "Oh, it is dark, it is dark !" will the darkness go ? Bring in the light and the darkness will vanish at once. This is the secret of reforming men.

Have faith in man first, and then having faith in him believe that if there are defects in him, if he makes mistakes, if he embraces the crudest and the vilest doctrines, believe that it is not from his real nature that they come, but from the want of higher ideals.

You give him the truth, and there your work is done. Let him compare it in his own mind with what he has already in him ; and, mark my words, if you have really given him the truth, the false must vanish, light must dispel darkness, and truth will bring the good out.

This is the way if you want to reform the country spiritually ; this is the way, and not fighting, not even telling people that what they are doing is bad. Put the good before them, see how eagerly they take it, see how the divine that never dies, that is always living in the human, comes up awakened and stretches out its hand for all that is good, and all that is glorious.

Gems of spirituality hidden in Books—The need to bring them out

My idea is first of all to bring out the gems of spirituality that are stored up in our Books, and in the possession of a few only, hidden, as it were, in monasteries and in forests—to bring

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them out ; to bring the knowledge out of them, not only from the hands where it is hidden, but from the still more inaccessible chest, the language in which it is preserved, the incrustation of centuries of Sanskrit words. In one word, I want to make them popular.

The great difficulty in the way is the Sanskrit language—the glorious language of ours ; and this difficulty cannot be removed until—if it is possible—the whole of our nation are good Sanskrit scholars.

Need to popularise Sanskrit

You will understand the difficulty when I tell you that I have been studying this language all my life, and yet every new book is new to me. How much more difficult would it then be for people who never had time to study the language thoroughly ! Therefore the ideas must be taught in the language of the people ; at the same time, Sanskrit education must go on along with it, because the very sound of Sanskrit words gives a prestige and a power and a strength to the race.

The attempts of the great Ramanuja and of Chaitanya and of Kabir to raise the lower classes of India show that marvellous results were attained during the lifetime of those great prophets ; yet the later failures have to be explained, and cause shown why the effect of their teachings stopped almost within a century of the passing away of these great Masters.

Sanskrit will help stabilize the progress made

The secret is here. They raised the lower classes ; they had all the wish that these should come up, but they did not apply their energies to the spreading of the Sanskrit language among the masses. Even the great Buddha made one false step when he stopped the Sanskrit language from being studied by the masses.

.....He spoke in the language of the people, and the people understood him. That was great ; it spread the ideas quickly and made them reach far and wide. But along with that, Sanskrit ought to have spread. Knowledge came but the

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prestige was not there, culture was not there. It is the culture that withstands shocks, not a simple mass of knowledge.

Teach the masses in the vernaculars, give them ideas ; they will get information, but something more is necessary ; give them culture. Until you give them that, there can be no permanence in the raised condition of the masses.

Our eternal fund of knowledge and object of faith

The Upanishads are our scriptures.

Whatever be his philosophy or sect, every one in India has to find his authority in the Upanishads. If he cannot, his sect would be heterodox. Therefore, perhaps the one name in modern times which would designate every Hindu throughout the land would be "Vedantist" or "Vaidika", as you may put it ; and in that sense I always use the words "Vedantism" and "Vedanta".

Even in the philosophical writings of the Buddhists or Jains, the help of Shrutis is never rejected, and at least in some of the Buddhistic schools, and in the majority of the Jain writings, the authority of the Shrutis is fully admitted, excepting what they call the Himsaka Shrutis, which they hold to be interpolations of the Brahmins.

Upanishads—the mine of strength

Strength, strength is what the Upanishads speak to me from every page. This is the one great thing to remember, it has been the one great lesson I have been taught in my life ; strength, it says, strength, O man, be not weak.

Everything that can weaken us as a race we have had for the last thousand years. It seems as if during that period the national life had this one end in view, viz. how to make us weaker and weaker, till we have become real earthworms, crawling at the feet of every one who dares to put his foot on us.

Therefore, my friends, as one of your blood, as one that lives and dies with you, let me tell you that we want strength,

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strength, and every time strength. And the Upanishads are the great mine of strength. Therein lies strength enough to invigorate the whole world ; the whole world can be vivified, made strong, energised through them.

They will call with trumpet voice upon the weak, the miserable, and the downtrodden of all races, all creeds, and all sects, to stand on their feet and be free. Freedom, physical freedom, mental freedom, and spiritual freedom are the watchwords of the Upanishads.

Wrong idea that the Upanishads talked only of recluse life

Aye, but it was only for the Sannyasin ! Rahasya (esoteric) ! The Upanishads were in the hands of the Sannyasin ; he went into the forest ! Shankara was a little kind and says even Grihasthas (householders) may study the Upanishads, it will do them good ; it will not hurt them. But still the idea is that the Upanishads talked only of the forest life of the recluse.

..... The only commentary, the authoritative commentary on the Vedas, has been made once and for all by Him who inspired the Vedas—by Krishna in the Gita. It is there for every one in every occupation of life. These conceptions of the Vedanta must come out, must remain not only in the forest, not only in the cave, but they must come out to work at the Bar and the Bench, in the Pulpit, and in the cottage of the poor man, with the fishermen that are catching fish, and with the students that are studying.

Whatever the station of life, Upanishads will help elevate the man

How can the fishermen and all these carry out the ideals of the Upanishads ? The way has been shown.

If the fisherman thinks that he is the Spirit, he will be a better fisherman ; if the student thinks he is the Spirit, he will be a better student. If the lawyer thinks that he is the Spirit, he will be a better lawyer, and so on.

Marvellous doctrine of the perfection of the soul

We are the children of the Almighty, we are sparks of the infinite, divine fire. How can we be nothing ? We are

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everything, ready to do everything, we can do everything, and man must do everything.

Therefore, my brethren, teach this life-saving, great, ennobling grand doctrine to your children, even from their very birth. You need not teach them Advaitism ; teach them Dvaitism, or any "ism" you please, but we have seen that this is the common "ism" all through India ; this marvellous doctrine of the soul, the perfection of the soul, is commonly believed in by all sects.

This faith in themselves was in the hearts of our ancestors, this faith in themselves was the motive power that pushed them forward and forward in the march of civilisation ; and if there has been degeneration, if there has been defect, mark my words, you will find that degradation to have started on the day our people lost this faith in themselves. Losing faith in one's self means losing faith in God.

Tremendous power of the Westerners' faith in themselves

What did I learn in the West, and what did I see behind those frothy sayings of the Christian sects repeating that man was a fallen and hopelessly fallen sinner ? There I saw that inside the national hearts of both Europe and America reside the tremendous power of the men's faith in themselves.

An English boy will tell you, "I am an Englishman, and I can do anything." The American boy will tell you the same thing, and so will any European boy. Can our boys say the same thing here ? No, nor even the boys' fathers. We have lost faith in ourselves.

There is not one system in India which does not hold the doctrine that God is within, that Divinity resides within all things. Every one of our Vedantic systems admits that all purity and perfection and strength are in the soul already.

The ideal of faith in ourselves is of the greatest help to us. If faith in ourselves had been more extensively taught and practised, I am sure a very large portion of the evils and miseries that we have, would have vanished. Throughout the history

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of mankind, if any motive power has been more potent than another in the lives of all great men and women, it is that of faith in themselves. Born with the consciousness that they were to be great, they became great.

An ordinary clerk becomes the founder of an Empire

Let a man go down as low as possible ; there must come a time when out of sheer desperation he will take an upward curve and will learn to have faith in himself. But it is better for us that we should know it from the very first. Why should we have all these bitter experiences in order to gain faith in ourselves ? We can see that all the difference between man and man is owing to the existence or non-existence of faith in himself.

Here, to India, came an Englishman who was only a clerk, and for want of funds and other reasons he twice tried to blow his brains out ; and when he failed, he believed in himself, he believed that he was born to do great things ; and that man became Lord Clive, the founder of the Empire.

Advaita in practical life

Believe, therefore, in yourselves, and if you want material wealth, work it out ; it will come to you. If you want to be intellectual, work it out on the intellectual plane, and intellectual giants you shall be. And if you want to attain to freedom, work it out on the spiritual plane, and free you shall be and shall enter into Nirvana, the Eternal Bliss.

But one defect which lay in the Advaita was its being worked out so long on the spiritual plane only, and nowhere else ; now the time has come when you have to make it practical. It shall no more be a Rahasya, a secret, it shall no more live with monks in caves and forests, and in the Himalayas ; it must come down to the daily, everyday life of the people ; it shall be worked out in the palace of the king, in the cave of the recluse, it shall be worked out in the cottage of the poor, by the beggar in the street, everywhere, anywhere it can be worked out.

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SPREAD OF EDUCATION OR SECULAR KNOWLEDGE

Wide spread education is the secret of the progress and solidarity of the Western nations.

The whole difference between the West and the East is in this : They are nations, we are not, *i.e.* civilisation, education in the West is general, it penetrates into the masses. The higher classes in India and America are the same, but the distance is infinite between the lower classes of the two countries. Why was it so easy for the English to conquer India ? It was because they are a nation, we are not.

When one of our great men dies, we must sit for centuries to have another ; they can produce them as fast as they die. It is the dearth of great ones. Why so ? Because they have such a bigger field of recruiting their great ones, we have so small. A nation of 300 millions has the smallest field of recruiting its great ones compared with nations of thirty, forty, or sixty millions, because the number of educated men and women in those nations is so great. Now do not mistake me, ... this is the great defect in our nation and must be removed. Educate and raise the masses, and thus alone a nation is possible.

You have read—मातृदेवो भव, पितृदेवो भव—"Look upon your mother as God, look upon your father as God,"—but I say, दरिद्रदेवो भव, मूर्खदेवो भव—The poor, the illiterate, the ignorant, the afflicted—let these be your God. Know that service to these alone is the highest religion.

Present system of education—negative and lifeless

The education that you are getting now has some good points, but it has a tremendous disadvantage which is so great that the good things are all weighed down. In the first place it is not a man-making education, it is merely and entirely a negative education. A negative education or any training that is based

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on negation, is worse than death. The child is taken to school, and the first thing he learns is that his father is a fool, the second thing that his grandfather is a lunatic, the third thing that all his teachers are hypocrites, the fourth that all the sacred books are lies ! By the time he is sixteen he is a mass of negation, lifeless and boneless.

Seldom are we given to understand that great men were ever born in our country. Nothing positive has been taught to us. We do not even know how to use our hands and feet ! We master all the facts and figures concerning the ancestors of the English, but we are sadly unmindful about our own. We have learnt only weakness. Being a conquered race, we have brought ourselves to believe that we are weak and have no independence in anything. So, how can it be but that the Shraddhaa is lost ?

Education is character-making assimilation of ideas

Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and runs riot there, undigested, all your life. We must have life-building, man-making, character-making, assimilation of ideas. If you have assimilated five ideas and made them your life and character, you have more education than any man who has got by heart a whole library.

The ideal, therefore, is that we must have the whole education of our country, spiritual and secular, in our hands, and it must be on national lines, through national methods as far as practical.

Difficult problem of educating the poor

The great difficulty in the way of educating the poor is this.

Even supposing we are in a position to open schools in each village free, still the poor boys would rather go to the plough to earn their living than come to your school. Neither have we the money nor can we make them come to education. The problem seems hopeless. I have found a way out. It is this.

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THE WAY OUT

Let Sannyasins take education to every door

If the mountain does not come to Mohammed, Mohammed must go to the mountain. If the poor cannot come to education, education must reach them at the plough, in the factory, everywhere.

There are thousands of single-minded, self-sacrificing Sannyasins in our own country, going from village to village, teaching religion. If some of them can be organised as teachers of secular things also, they will go from place to place, from door to door, not only preaching but teaching also.

Let these men go from village to village bringing not only religion to the door of everyone but also education.

Now suppose the villagers after their day's work have come to their village and sitting under a tree or somewhere are smoking and talking the time away. Suppose two of these educated Sannyasins get hold of them there and with a camera throw astronomical or other pictures, scenes from different nations, histories, etc. Thus with globes, maps, etc.—and all this orally —how much can be done. ..... ?

It is not that the eye is the only door of knowledge, the ear can do all the same. So they would have ideas and morality and hope for better. Here our work ends.

They are to be given ideas ; their eyes are to be opened to what is going on in the world around them, and then they will work out their own salvation.

Our duty is to put the chemicals together, the crystallisation will come through God's laws. Let us put ideas into their heads, and they will do the rest. Now this means educating the masses.

Great religious enthusiasm will do the work

What would make the Sannyasins do this sacrifice, undertake such a task ?—religious enthusiasm. Every new religious wave requires a new centre. The old religion can only be revivified

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by a new centre. Hang your dogmas or doctrines, they never pay. It is a character, a life, a centre, a God-man that must lead the way, that must be the centre round which all other elements will gather themselves and then fall like a tidal wave upon the society, carrying all before it, washing away all impurities.

Again, a piece of wood can only easily be cut along the grain. So the old Hinduism can only be reformed through Hinduism, and not through the new-fangled reform movements.

At the same time the reformers must be able to unite in themselves the culture of both the East and the West.

We must have a hold on the spiritual and secular education of the nation. ..... You must dream it, you must talk it, you must think it, and you must work it out. Till then there is no salvation for the race. Now this requires an organisation.

Opening of centres of activity at all places

..... This is a very big scheme, a very big plan. I do not know whether it will ever work out. But we must begin the work. But how ? Take Madras, for instance. We must have a temple, for with Hindus, religion must come first. Then, you may say, all sects will quarrel about it. But we will make it a non-sectarian temple, having only "Om" as the symbol, the greatest symbol of any sect.

If there is any sect here, which believes that "Om" ought not to be the symbol, it has no right to call itself Hindu. All will have the right to interpret Hinduism, each one according to his own sect ideas, but we must have a common temple. You can have your own images and symbols in other places, but do not quarrel here with those who differ from you.

Here should be taught the common grounds of our different sects, and at the same time the different sects should have perfect liberty to come and teach their doctrines, with only one restriction that is, not to quarrel with other sects. Say what you have to say, the world wants it, but the world has no time to hear what you think about other people ; you can keep that to yourselves.

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Training of preachers and teachers

Secondly, in connection with this temple there should be an institution to train teachers who must go about preaching religion and giving secular education to our people ; they must carry both. As we have been already carrying religion from door to door, let us along with it carry secular education also. That can be easily done. Then the work will extend through these bands of teachers and preachers, and gradually we shall have similar temples in other places, until we have covered the whole of India. That is my plan.

It may appear gigantic, but it is much needed. You may ask, where is the money. Money is not needed. Money is nothing. For the last twelve years of my life, I did not know where the next meal would come from ; but money and everything else I want must come, because they are my slaves, and not I theirs ; money and everything else must come. Must—that is the word.

Men—sincere men—are wanted

Where are the men ? That is the question.

Men, men, these are wanted : everything else will be ready, but strong, vigorous, believing young men, sincere to the backbone, are wanted.

My faith is in the younger generation, the modern generation, out of them will come my workers. They will work out the whole problem, like lions. I have formulated the idea and have given my life to it. If I do not achieve success, some better one will come after me to work it out, and I shall be content to struggle.

Have that faith, each one of you, in yourself—that eternal power is lodged in every soul—and you will revive the whole of India. Aye, we will then go to every country under the sun, and our ideas will before long be a component of the many forces that are working to make up every nation in the world. We must enter into the life of every race in India and abroad ; we shall have to *work* to bring this about. Now for that, I

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want young men. "It is the young, the strong, and healthy, of sharp intellect, that will reach the Lord," say the Vedas.

This is the time to decide your future—while you possess the energy of youth, not when you are worn out and jaded, but in the freshness and vigour of youth. Work ; this is the time, for the freshest, the untouched and unsmelled flowers alone are to be laid at the feet of the Lord, and such he receives.

..... Let us therefore take up a great ideal, and give up our whole life to it. Let this be our determination, and may He, the Lord, who "comes again and again for the salvation of His own people", to quote from our scriptures—may the great Krishna bless us, and lead us all to the fulfilment of our aims !

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत । (*Katha Up. I. iii, 4*)

Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached.

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PART TWO

SELECTIONS FROM

ADDRESSES, DISCOURSES AND WRITINGS

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ON THE BOUNDS OF HINDUISM*

Having been directed by the Editor, writes our representative, to interview Swami Vivekananda on the question of converts to Hinduism, I found an opportunity one evening on the roof of a Ganges houseboat. It was after nightfall, and we had stopped at the embankment of the Ramakrishna Math, and there the Swami came down to speak with me.

Time and place were alike delightful. Overhead the stars, and around—the rolling Ganges ; and on one side stood the dimly lighted building, with its background of palms and lofty shade-trees.

"I want to see you, Swami," I began, "on this matter of receiving back into Hinduism those who have been perverted from it. Is it your opinion that they should be received ?"

"Certainly," said the Swami, "they can and ought to be taken."

He sat gravely for a moment, thinking, and then resumed, "Besides," he said, "we shall otherwise decrease in numbers. When the Mohammedans first came, we are said—I think on the authority of Ferishta, the oldest Mohammedan historian—to have been six hundred millions of Hindus. Now we are about two hundred millions. And then every man going out of the Hindu pale is not only a man less, but an enemy the more.

"Again, the vast majority of Hindu perverts to Islam and Christianity are perverts by the sword, or the descendants of

* Prabuddha Bharat, April, 1899

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these. It would be obviously unfair to subject these to disabilities of any kind. As to the case of born aliens, did you say ? Why, born aliens have been converted in the past by crowds, and the process is still going on.

"In my own opinion, this statement not only applies to aboriginal tribes, to outlying nations, and to almost all our conquerors before the Mohammedan conquest, but also to all those castes who find a special origin in the Puranas. I hold that they have been aliens thus adopted.

"Ceremonies of expiation are no doubt suitable in the case of willing converts, returning to their Mother-Church, as it were ; but on those who were alienated by conquest—as in Kashmir and Nepal—or on strangers wishing to join us, no penance should be imposed."

"But of what caste would these people be, Swamiji ?" I ventured to ask. "They must have some, or they can never be assimilated into the great body of Hindus. Where shall we look for their rightful place ?"

"Returning converts," said the Swami quietly, "will gain their own castes, of course. And new people will make theirs. You will remember, "he added, "that this has already been done in the case of Vaishnavism. Converts from different castes and aliens were all able to combine under that flag and form a caste by themselves,—and a very respectable one too. From Ramanuja down to Chaitanya of Bengal, all great Vaishnava Teachers have done the same."

"And where should these new people expect to marry ?" I asked.

"Amongst themselves, as they do now," said the Swami quietly.

"Then as to names," I enquired, "I suppose aliens and perverts who have adopted non-Hindu names should be named newly. Would you give them caste-names, or what ?"

"Certainly," said the Swami, thoughtfully, "there is a great deal in a name !" and on this question he would say no more.

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But my next enquiry drew blood. "Would you leave these new-comers, Swamiji, to choose their own form of religious belief out of many-visaged Hinduism, or would you chalk out a religion for them ?"

"Can you ask that ?" he said. "They will choose for themselves. For unless a man chooses for himself, the very spirit of Hinduism is destroyed. The essence of our Faith consists simply in this freedom of the Ishta".

I thought the utterance a weighty one, for the man before me has spent more years than any one else living, I fancy, in studying the common bases of Hinduism in a scientific and sympathetic spirit—and the freedom of the Ishta is obviously a principle big enough to accommodate the world.

But the talk passed to other matters, and then with a cordial good night this great teacher of religion lifted his lantern and went back into the monastery, while I, by the pathless paths of the Ganges, in and out amongst her crafts of many sizes, made the best of my way back to my Calcutta home.

* * *

STAND UP IN DEFENCE OF YOUR RELIGION

"My dear Sinha, if any body insulted your mother, what would you do ?"

"I would fall upon him, sir, and teach him a good lesson !" "Well said, but, now if you had the same positive feeling for your own religion, the true Mother of our country, you could never bear to see any Hindu brother converted into a Christian. Nevertheless, you see this occurring every day, yet you are quite indifferent ! . Where is your faith ? Where is your patriotism ? Everyday Christian Missionaries abuse Hinduism to your faces, and yet how many are there amongst you who will stand up in its defence, whose blood boils with righteous indignation at the fact ?"

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ON INDIAN WOMEN—THEIR PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE*

It was early one Sunday morning, (writes our representative), in a beautiful Himalayan valley, that I was at last able to carry out the order of the Editor, and call on the Swami Vivekananda, to ascertain something of his views on the position and prospects of Indian women.

"Let us go for a walk," said the Swami, when I had announced my errand, and we set out at once amongst some of the most lovely scenery in the world.

By sunny and shady ways we went, through quiet villages, amongst playing children and across the golden cornfields. Here the tall trees seemed to pierce the blue above, and there a group of peasant girls stooped, sickle in hand, to cut and carry off the plume-tipped stalks of maize-straw for the winter stores. Now the road led into an apple orchard, where great heaps of crimson fruit lay under the trees for sorting, and again we were out in the open, facing the snows that rose in august beauty above the white clouds against the sky.

At last my companion broke the silence, "The Aryan and Semitic ideals of woman," he said, "have always been diametrically opposed. Amongst the Semites the presence of woman is considered dangerous to devotion, and she may not perform any religious function, even such as the killing of a bird for food : according to the Aryan a man cannot perform a religious action without a wife".

"But Swamiji !" said I—startled at an assertion so sweeping and so unexpected—"is Hinduism not an Aryan faith ?"

"Modern Hinduism," said the Swami quietly, "is largely Pauranika, that is, post-Buddhistic in origin. Dayananda Saraswati pointed out that though a wife is absolutely necessary in the Sacrifice of the domestic fire, which is a Vedic rite, she may not touch the Shalagrama Shila, or the household-idol, because that dates from the later period of the Puranas."

* Prabuddha Bharat, December, 1898

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"And so you consider the inequality of woman amongst us as entirely due to the influence of Buddhism ?"

"Where it exists, certainly," said the Swami, "but we should not allow the sudden influx of European criticism and our consequent sense of contrast to make us acquiesce too readily in this notion of the inequality of our women. Circumstances have forced upon us, for many centuries, the woman's need of protection. This, and not her inferiority, is the true reading of our customs."

"Are you then entirely satisfied with the position of women amongst us, Swamiji ?"

"By no means," said the Swami, "but our right of interference is limited entirely to giving education. Women must be put in a position to solve their own problems in their own way. No one can or ought to do this for them. And our Indian women are as capable of doing it as any in the world."

"How do you account for the evil influence which you attribute to Buddhism ?"

"It came only with the decay of the faith," said the Swami. "Every movement triumphs by dint of some unusual characteristic, and when it falls, that point of pride becomes its chief element of weakness. The Lord Buddha—greatest of men—was a marvellous organiser, and carried the world by this means. But his religion was the religion of a monastic order. It had, therefore, the evil effect of making the very robe of the monk honoured. He also introduced for the first time the community life of religious houses and thereby necessarily made women inferior to men, since the great abbesses could take no important step without the advice of certain abbots. It ensured its immediate object, the solidarity of the faith, you see, only its far-reaching effects are to be deplored."

"But Sannyasa is recognised in the Vedas !"

"Of course it is, but without making any distinction between men and women. Do you remember how Yajnavalkya was questioned at the Court of King Janaka ? His principal examiner was Vachaknavi, the maiden orator—Brahmavadini, as the

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word of the day was. 'Like two shining arrows in the hand of the skilled archer,' she says, 'are my questions'. Her sex is not even commented upon. Again, could anything be more complete than the equality of boys and girls in our old forest universities ? Read our Sanskrit dramas—read the story of Shakuntala, and see if Tennyson's 'Princess' has anything to teach us !"

"You have a wonderful way of revealing the glories of our past, Swamiji !"

"Perhaps, because I have seen both sides of the world," said the Swami gently, "and I know that the race that produced Sita—even if it only dreamt of her—has a reverence for woman that is unmatched on the earth. There is many a burden bound with legal tightness on the shoulders of Western women that is utterly unknown to ours. We have our wrongs and our exceptions certainly, but so have they. We must never forget that all over the globe the general effort is to express love and tenderness and uprightness, and that national customs are only the nearest vehicles of this expression. With regard to the domestic virtues I have no hesitation in saying that our Indian methods have in many ways the advantage over all others."

"Then have our women any problems at all, Swamiji ?"

"Of course, they have many and grave problems, but none that are not to be solved by that magic word 'education'. The true education, however, is not yet conceived of amongst us."

"And how would you define that ?"

"I never define anything," said the Swami, smiling. "Still, it may be described as a development of faculty, not an accumulation of words, or, as a training of individuals to will rightly and efficiently. So shall we bring to the need of India great fearless women—women worthy to continue the traditions of Sanghamitta, Lila, Ahalya Bai, and Mira Bai—women fit to be mothers of heroes, because they are pure and selfless, strong with the strength that comes of touching the feet of God."

"So you consider that there should be a religious element in education, Swamiji ?"

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"I look upon religion as the innermost core of education," said the Swami solemnly. "Mind, I do not mean my own, or any one else's opinion about religion. I think the teacher should take the pupil's starting-point in this, as in other respects, and enable her to develop along her own line of least resistance."

"But surely the religious exaltation of Brahmacharya, by taking the highest place from the mother and wife and giving it to those who evade those relations, is a direct blow dealt at woman ?"

"You should remember," said the Swami, "that if religion exalts Brahmacharya for woman, it does exactly the same for man. Moreover, your question shows a certain confusion in your own mind. Hinduism indicates one duty, only one, for the human soul. It is to seek to realise the permanent amidst the evanescent. No one presumes to point out any one way in which this may be done. Marriage or non-marriage, good or evil, learning or ignorance, any of these is justified, if it leads to the goal. In this respect lies the great contrast between it and Buddhism, for the latter's outstanding direction is to realise the impermanence of the external, which, broadly speaking, can only be done in one way. Do you recall the story of the young Yogi in the Mahabharata, who prided himself on his psychic powers by burning the bodies of a crow and a crane by his intense will, produced by anger ? Do you remember that the young saint went into the town and found first a wife nursing her sick husband and then the butcher Dharma-Vyadha, both of whom had obtained enlightenment in the path of common faithfulness and duty ?"

"And so what would you say, Swamiji, to the women of this country ?"

"Why, to the women of this country," said the Swami, "I would say exactly what I say to the men. Believe in India and in our Indian faith. Be strong and hopeful and unashamed, and remember that with something to take, Hindus have immeasurably more to give than any other people in the world."

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ON WOMEN, INDIAN AND WESTERN*

"I should very much like our women to have your intellectuality, but not if it must be at the cost of purity," said Swami Vivekananda in New York. "I admire you for all that you know, but I dislike the way that you cover what is bad with roses and call it good. Intellectuality is not the highest good. Morality and spirituality are the things for which we strive. Our women are not so learned, but they are more pure. To all women every man save her husband should be as her son.

"To all men every woman save his own wife should be as his mother. When I look about me and see what you call gallantry, my soul is filled with disgust. Not until you learn to ignore the question of sex and to meet on a ground of common humanity will you women really develop. Until then they are playthings, nothing more. All this is the cause of divorce. Your men bow low and offer a chair, but in another breath they offer compliments. They say, Oh, madam, how beautiful are your eyes! What right have they to do this? How dare a man venture so far, and how can you women permit it? Such things develop the less noble side of humanity. They do not tend to nobler ideals.

"We should not think that we are men and women, but only that we are human beings, born to cherish and to help one another. No sooner are a young man and a young woman left alone than he pays compliments to her, and perhaps before he takes a wife he has courted two hundred women. Bah! If I belonged to the marrying set I could find a woman to love without all that!

"When I was in India and saw these things from the outside I was told it is all right, it is mere pleasantry, and I believed it. But I have travelled since then, and I know it is not right. It is wrong, only you of the West shut your eyes and call it good. The trouble with the nations of the West is that they are young, foolish, fickle and wealthy. What mischief can come of one of these qualities; but when all three, all four, are combined, beware!"

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* Extract from an address in New York.

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SAYANACHARYA RE-BORN AS MAX MULLER ! IS IT AN IDLE FANCY ?*

Well, do you know, my impression is that it is Sayana who is born again as Max Muller to revive his own commentary on the Vedas ? I have had this notion for long. It became confirmed in my mind, it seems, after I had seen Max Muller. Even here in this country, you don't find a scholar so persevering, and so firmly grounded in the Vedas and the Vedanta. Over and above this, what a deep, unfathomable respect for Shri Ramakrishna ! Do you know, he believes in his Divine Incarnation ! And what great hospitality towards me when I was his guest ! Seeing the old man and his lady, it seemed to me that they were living their home-life like another Vasishtha and Arundhati ! At the time of parting with me, tears came into the eyes of the old man.

Disciple.—But, sir, if Sayana himself became Max Muller, then why was he born as a *mlechchha* instead of being born in the sacred land of India ?

Swamiji.—The feeling and the distinction that I am an Aryan and the other is a *mlechchha*, come from ignorance. But one who is the commentator of the Vedas, the shining embodiment of knowledge—what are Varnashrama and caste divisions to him ? To him they are wholly meaningless, and he can assume human birth wherever he likes for doing good to mankind. Specially, if he did not choose to be born in a land which excelled both in learning and wealth, where would he secure the large expenses for publishing such stupendous volumes ? Didn't you hear that the East India Company paid nine lakhs of rupees in cash to have the RigVeda published ? Even this money was not enough. Hundreds of Vedic Pundits had to be employed in this country on monthly stipends. Has anybody seen in this age here in this country such profound yearning for knowledge, such prodigious investment of money for the sake of light and learning ? Max Muller himself has written it in his preface, that for twenty-five years he prepared only the manuscripts. Then the printing took another twenty years ! It is not possible for an ordinary man to drudge for fortyfive years of his life with one publication. Just think of it ! Is it an idle fancy of mine to say he is Sayana himself ?

* 'The complete works' Vol. VI.

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FABRICS OF CIVILISATIONS—ARYAN AND EUROPEAN*

The European civilisation may be likened to a piece of cloth, of which these are the materials : its loom is a vast temperate hilly country on the sea-shore ; its cotton, a strong warlike mongrel race formed by the intermixture of various races ; its warp is warfare, in defence of one's self and one's religion. The one who wields the sword is great, and the one who cannot, gives up his independence and lives under the protection of some warrior's sword. Its woof is commerce. The means to this civilisation is sword ; its auxiliary—courage and strength ; its aim—enjoyment here and hereafter.

And how is it with us ? The Aryans are lovers of peace, cultivators of the soil, and are quite happy and contented if they can only rear their families undisturbed. In such a life they have ample leisure, and therefore greater opportunity of being thoughtful and civilised. Our King Janaka tilled the soil with his own hands, and he was the greatest of the knowers of Truth, of his time. With us, Rishis, Munis, and Yogis have been born from the very beginning ; they have known from the first that the world is a chimera. Plunder and fight as you may, the enjoyment that you are seeking is only in peace ; and peace, in the renunciation of physical pleasures. Enjoyment lies not in physical development, but in the culture of the mind and the intellect. It was the knowers who reclaimed the jungles for cultivation.

Then, over that cleared plot of land was built the Vedic altar ; in that pure sky of Bharata, up rose the sacred smoke of Yajnas ; in that air breathing peace, the Vedic Mantras echoed and re-echoed—and cattle and other beasts grazed without any fear of danger. The place of the sword was assigned at the feet of learning and Dharma. Its only work was to protect Dharma and save the lives of men and cattle. The hero was the protector of the weak in danger—the Kshatriya. Ruling over the plough and the sword was Dharma, the protector of all. He is the King of kings ; he is ever-awake even while the

* Extract from 'The East and the West'. ('The complete works' Vol, V)

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world sleeps. Everyone was free under the protection of Dharma.

And what your European Pundits say about the Aryan's swooping down from some foreign land, snatching away the lands of the aborigines and settling in India by exterminating them, is all pure nonsense, foolish talk! Strange, that our Indian scholars, too, say amen to them; and all these monstrous lies are being taught to our boys! This is very bad indeed.

I am an ignoramus myself; I do not pretend to any scholarship; but with the little that I understand, I strongly protested against these ideas at the Paris Congress. I have been talking with the Indian and European savants on the subject, and hope to raise many objections to this theory in detail, when time permits. And this I say to you, to our Pundits, also—you are learned men, hunt up your old books and scriptures, please, and draw your own conclusions.

Wherever the Europeans find an opportunity, they exterminate the aborigines and settle down in ease and comfort on their lands; and therefore they think the Aryans must have done the same! The Westerners would be considered wretched vagabonds if they lived in their native homes depending wholly on their own internal resources, and so they have to run wildly about the world seeking how they can feed upon the fat of the land of others, by spoliation and slaughter; and therefore they conclude the Aryans must have done the same! But where is your proof? Guess-work? Then keep your fanciful guesses to yourselves!

In what Veda, in what Sukta, do you find that the Aryans came into India from a foreign country? Where do you get the idea that they slaughtered the wild aborigines? What do you gain by talking such nonsense? Vain has been your study of the Ramayana; why manufacture a big fine story out of it?

Well, what is the Ramayana? The conquest of the savage aborigines of Southern India by the Aryans! Indeed! Ramachandra is a civilised Aryan king, and with whom is he fighting? With King Ravana of Lanka. Just read the Ramayana, and you will find that Ravana was rather more and not less civilised than Ramachandra. The civilisation of Lanka was rather higher, and surely not lower, than that of Ayodhya.

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And then, when were these Vanaras (monkeys) and other southern Indians conquered ? They were all, on the other hand, Ramachandra's friends and allies. Say which kingdoms of Vali and Guhaka were annexed by Ramachandra ?.....

The loom of the fabric of Aryan civilisation is a vast, warm, level country, interspersed with broad, navigable rivers. The cotton of this cloth is composed of highly civilised, semi-civilised, and barbarian tribes, mostly Aryan. Its warp is Varnashramachara, and its woof, the conquest of strife and competition in nature.

And may I ask you, Europeans, what country you have ever raised to better conditions ? Wherever you have found weaker races, you have exterminated them by the roots, as it were. You have settled on their lands, and they are gone for ever. What is the history of your America, your Australia, and New Zealand, your Pacific Islands and South Africa ? Where are those aboriginal races there today ? They are all exterminated, you have killed them outright, as if they were wild beasts. It is only where you have not the power to do so, and there only, that other nations are still alive.

But India has never done that. The Aryans were kind and generous ; and in their hearts which were large and unbounded as the ocean, and in their brains gifted with superhuman genius, all these ephemeral and apparently pleasant but virtually beastly processes, never found a place. And I ask you, fools of my own country, would there have been this institution of Varnashrama, if the Aryans had exterminated the aborigines in order to settle on their lands ?

The object of the peoples of Europe is to exterminate all in order to live themselves. The aim of the Aryans is to raise all up to their own level, nay, even to a higher level than themselves. The means of European civilisation is the sword ; of the Aryans, the division into different Varnas. This system of division into different Varnas is the stepping-stone to civilisation, making one rise higher and higher in proportion to one's learning and culture. In Europe, it is everywhere victory to the strong, and death to the weak. In the land of Bharata, every social rule is for the protection of the weak.

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PART THREE

SOME OBSERVATIONS AND ADMONITIONS

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OBSERVATIONS

WITH OR WITHOUT SOME HISTORICAL TRUTH AS ITS NUCLEUS, EVERY PURANA TEACHES SOME GRAND TRUTH*

Some historical truth is the nucleus of every Purana. The object of the Puranas is to teach mankind the sublime truth in various forms ; and even if they do not contain any historical truth, they form a great authority for us in respect of the highest truth which they inculcate. Take the Ramayana for illustration, and for viewing it as an authority on building character, it is not even necessary that one like Rama should have ever lived. The sublimity of the law propounded by Ramayana or Bharata does not depend upon the truth of any personality like Rama or Krishna, and one can even hold that such personages never lived, and at the same time take those writings as high authorities in respect of the grand ideas which they place before mankind.

Our philosophy does not depend upon any personality for its truth. Thus Krishna did not teach anything new or original to the world, nor does Ramayana profess anything which is not contained in the Scriptures. It is to be noted that Christianity cannot stand without Christ, Mohammedanism without Mohammed, and Buddhism without Buddha, but Hinduism stands independent of any man, and for the purpose of estimating the philosophical truth contained in any Purana, we need

*Extract from an interview (The Hindu, Madras, February 1897)

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not consider the question whether the personages treated of therein were really material men or were fictitious characters.

- The object of the Puranas was the education of mankind, and the sages who constructed them contrived to find some historical personages and to superimpose upon them all the best or worst qualities just as they wanted to, and laid down the rules of morals for the conduct of mankind. Is it necessary that a demon with ten heads (Dashamukha) should have actually lived as stated in the Ramayana ? It is the representation of some truth which deserves to be studied, apart from the question whether Dashamukha was a real or fictitious character. You can now depict Krishna in a still more attractive manner, and the description depends upon the sublimity of your ideal, but there stands the grand philosophy contained in the Puranas.

* * *

NEGATIVE MOVEMENTS ALWAYS DIE WITH THE OBJECTS THEY HATE AND OPPOSE.*

In the south, however, the spiritual upheaval of Shankara and Ramanuja was followed by the usual Indian sequence of united races and powerful empires. It was the home of refuge of Indian religion and civilisation, when northern India from sea to sea lay bound at the feet of central Asiatic conquerors. The Mohammedan tried for centuries to subjugate the south, but can scarcely be said to have got even a strong foothold ; and when the strong and united empire of the Moguls was very near completing its conquest, the hills and plateaus of the south poured in their bands of fighting peasant horsemen, determined to die for the religion which Ramdas preached and Tuka sang ; and in a short time the gigantic empire of the Moguls was only a name.

The movements in northern India during the Mohammedan period are characterised by their uniform attempt to hold the

*Extract from 'Historical evolution of India' ('The complete works' Vol.. VI)

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masses back from joining the religion of the conquerors—which brought in its train social and spiritual equality for all.

The friars of the orders founded by Ramananda, Kabir, Dadu, Chaitanya, or Nanak were all agreed in preaching the equality of man, however differing from each other in philosophy. Their energy was for the most part spent in checking the rapid conquest of Islam among the masses, and they had very little left to give birth to new thoughts and aspirations. Though evidently successful in their purpose of keeping the masses within the folds of the old religion, and tempering the fanaticism of the Mohammedans, they were mere apologists, struggling to obtain permission to live.

One great prophet, however, arose in the north, Govind Singh, the last Guru of the Sikhs, with creative genius ; and the result of his spiritual work was followed by the well-known political organisation of the Sikhs. We have seen throughout the history of India, a spiritual upheaval is almost always succeeded by a political unity extending over more or less area of the continent, which in its turn helps to strengthen the spiritual aspiration that brings it to being.

But the spiritual aspiration that preceded the rise of the Maharatta or the Sikh empire was entirely reactionary. We seek in vain to find in the court of Poona or Lahore even a ray of reflection of that intellectual glory which surrounded the courts of the Moguls, much less the brilliance of Malava or Vidyanagara. It was intellectually the darkest period of Indian history ; and both these meteoric empires, representing the upheaval of mass-fanaticism and hating culture with all their hearts, lost all their motive power as soon as they had succeeded in destroying the rule of the hated Mohammedans.

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ELEVATE THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE NATION AND ITS INSTITUTIONS WILL FOLLOW SUIT*

All healthy social changes are the manifestations of the spiritual forces working within, and if these are strong and well adjusted, society will arrange itself accordingly. Each individual has to work out his own salvation ; there is no other way, and so also with nations. Again, the great institutions of every nation are the conditions of its very existence and cannot be transformed by the mould of any other race. Until higher institutions have been evolved, any attempt to break the old ones will be disastrous. Growth is always gradual.

It is very easy to point out the defects of institutions, all being more or less imperfect, but he is the real benefactor of humanity who helps the individual to overcome his imperfections under whatever institutions he may live. The individuals being raised, the nation and its institutions are bound to rise.

Bad customs and laws are ignored by the virtuous, and unwritten but mightier laws of love, sympathy, and integrity take their place. Happy is the nation which can rise to the necessity of but few law books, and needs no longer to bother its head about this or that institution. Good men rise beyond all laws, and will help their fellows to rise under whatever conditions they live.

The salvation of India, therefore, depends on the strength of the individual, and the realisation by each man of the divinity within.

* * *

*Extract from 'Sayings and Utterances'—('The Complete Works' Vol. V)

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COMMUNION WITH GOD HAS TO BE PERSONAL AND NEVER CONGREGATIONAL*

We see then that a congregational religion can never be. The *real* work of religion must be one's own concern. I have an idea of my own, I must keep it sacred and secret, because I know that it need not be your idea. Secondly, why should I create a disturbance by wanting to tell everyone what my idea is ? Other people would come and fight me. They cannot do so if I do not tell them ; but if I go about telling them what my ideas are, they will all oppose me. So what is the use of talking about them ? This Ishta should be kept secret, it is between you and God.

All theoretical portions of religion can be preached in public and made congregational, but higher religion cannot be made public. I cannot get ready my religious feelings at a moment's notice. What is the result of this mummery and mockery ? It is making a joke of religion, the worst of blasphemy. The result is what you find in the churches of the present day. How can human beings stand this religious drilling ? It is like soldiers in a barrack. Shoulder arms, kneel down, take a book, all regulated exactly. Five minutes of feeling, five minutes of reason, five minutes of prayer, all arranged beforehand. These mummeries have driven out religion.

Let the churches preach doctrines, theories, philosophies to their heart's content, but when it comes to worship, the real practical part of religion, it should be as Jesus says, "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret."

* * *

*Extract from 'Addresses on Bhakti-Yoga' ('The Complete works' Vol. IV)

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IMAGE-WORSHIP AMONG THE ICONOCLASTS[1]

All over the world you will find images in some form or other. With some, it is in the form of a man, which is the best form. If I wanted to worship an image I would rather have it in the form of a man than of an animal, or building, or any other form.

One sect thinks a certain form is the right sort of image, and another thinks it is bad. The Christian thinks that when God came in the form of a dove it was all right, but if He comes in the form of a fish, as the Hindus say, it is very wrong and superstitious. The Jews think if an idol be made in the form of a chest with two angels sitting on it, and a book on it, it is all right, but if it is in the form of a man or a woman, it is awful. The Mohammedans think that when they pray, if they try to form a mental image of the temple with the Caaba, the black stone in it, and turn towards the west, it is all right, but if you form the image in the shape of a church it is idolatry.

This is the defect of image-worship. Yet all these seem to be necessary stages.

* * *

STUMBLING UPON SUPER-CONSCIOUS STATE DANGEROUS[2]

The Yogi teaches that the mind itself has a higher state of existence, beyond reason, a super-conscious state, and when the mind gets to that higher state, then this knowledge, beyond reasoning, comes to man. Metaphysical and transcendental knowledge comes to that man. This state of going beyond reason, transcending ordinary human nature, may sometimes come by chance to a man who does not understand its science ; he, as it were, stumbles upon it.

[1] Extract from 'Addresses on Bhakti Yoga' ('The complete works' Vol. IV)
[2] " " 'Raja-Yoga' ('The Complete Works' Vol. I)

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The Yogi says there is a great danger in stumbling upon this state. In a good many cases there is the danger of the brain being deranged, and, as a rule, you will find that all those men, however great they were, who had stumbled upon this super-conscious state without understanding it, groped in the dark, and generally had, along with their knowledge, some quaint superstition. They opened themselves to hallucinations. Mohammed claimed that the Angel Gabriel came to him in a cave one day and took him on the heavenly horse, Harak, and he visited the heavens. But with all that, Mohammed spoke some wonderful truths.

If you read the Koran, you find the most wonderful truths mixed with superstitions. How will you explain it ? That man was inspired, no doubt, but that inspiration was, as it were, stumbled upon. He was not a trained Yogi, and did not know the reason of what he was doing. Think of the good Mohammed did to the world, and think of the great evil that has been done through his fanaticism ! Think of the millions massacred through his teachings, mothers bereft of their children, children made orphans, whole countries destroyed, mllions upon millions of people killed !

So we see this danger by studying the lives of great teachers like Mohammed and others. Yet we find, at the same time, that they were all inspired. Whenever a prophet got into the super-conscious state by heightening his emotional nature, he brought away from it not only some truths, but some fanaticism also, some superstition which injured the world as much as the greatness of the teaching helped. To get any reason out of the mass of incongruity we call human life, we have to transcend our reason, but we must do it scientifically, slowly, by regular practice, and we must cast off all superstition.

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ADMONITIONS

YOU, THE ANGLICISED COUNTRYMEN !*

..... And you too understand this full well, I mean those of our countrymen who have become thoroughly Europeanised both in external habits and in ways of thought and ideas, and who are continually crying their eyes out, and praying to the Europeans to save them—"We are degraded, we have come down to the level of brutes ; O ye European people, you are our saviours, have pity on us and raise us from this fallen state !" And you too understand this, who are singing *Te Deums* and raising a hue and cry that Jesus is come to India, and are seeing the fulfilment of divine decree in the fullness of time. Oh, dear ! No ! neither Jesus is come nor Jehovah ; nor will they come ; they are now busy in saving their own hearths and homes and have no time to come to our country.

Here is the selfsame Old Shiva seated as before, the bloody Mother Kali worshipped with the selfsame paraphernalia, the pastoral Shepherd of Love, Shri Krishna, playing on His flute. Once this Old Shiva, riding on His bull and taboring on His Damaru travelled from India, on the one side, to Sumatra, Borneo, Celebes, Australia, as far as the shores of America, and on the other side, this Old Shiva battened His bull in Tibet, China, Japan, and as far up as Siberia, and is still doing the same. The Mother Kali is still exacting Her worship even in China and Japan : it is She whom the Christians metamorphosed into the Virgin Mary, and worship as the mother of Jesus the Christ.

*Extract from 'The East and the West' ('The Complete works' Vol. V)

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Behold the Himalayas ! There to the north is Kailas, the main abode of the Old Shiva. That throne the ten-headed, twenty-armed, mighty Ravana could not shake—now for the missionaries to attempt the task ?—Bless my soul ! Here in India will ever be the Old Shiva taboring on His Damaru, the Mother Kali worshipped with animal sacrifice, and the lovable Shri Krishna playing on His flute. Firm as the Himalayas they are ; and no attempts of anyone, Christian or other missionaries, will ever be able to remove them.

If you cannot bear them—avaunt ! For a handful of you, shall a whole nation be wearied out of all patience and bored to death ? Why don't you make your way somewhere else where you may find fields to freely graze upon—the wide world is open to you ! But no, that they won't do. Where is that strength to do it ? They would eat the salt of that Old Shiva and play Him false, slander Him, and sing the glory of a foreign Saviour. .....

To such of our countrymen who go whimpering before foreigners—"We are very low, we are mean, we are degraded, everything we have is diabolical,"—to them we say : "Yes, that may be the truth, forsooth, because you profess to be truthful and we have no reason to disbelieve you ; but why do you include the whole nation in that *We* ? Pray, sirs, what sort of good manner is that ?"

* * *

COME, BE MEN !*

..... And you, what are you ? ..... Talking twaddle all your lives, vain talkers, what are you ? Come, see these people, and then go and hide your faces in shame. A race of dotards, you lose your caste if you come out ! Sitting down these hundreds of years with an ever-increasing load of crystallised superstition on your heads, for hundreds of years spending all your energy upon discussing the touchableness or untouchableness

*Extract from 'Letters of Swami Vivekanand'.

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of this food or that, with all humanity crushed out of you by the continuous social tyranny of ages—what are you ? And what are you doing now ?.....

Promenading the sea-shores with books in your hands—repeating undigested stray bits of European brainwork, and the whole soul bent upon getting a thirty-rupee clerkship, or at best becoming a lawyer—the height of young India's ambition—and every student with a whole brood of hungry children cackling at his heels and asking for bread ! Is there not water enough in the sea to drown you, books, gowns, university diplomas, and all ?

* * *

YOU, THE UPPER CLASSES OF INDIA !*

However much you may parade your descent from Aryan ancestors and sing the glories of ancient India day and night, and however much you may be strutting in the pride of your birth, you, the upper classes of India, do you think you are alive ? You are but mummies ten thousand years old ! It is among those whom your ancestors despised as "walking carrion" that the little of vitality there is still in India is to be found ; and it is you who are the real "walking corpses."

Your houses, your furniture, look like museum specimens, so lifeless and antiquated they are ; and even an eye-witness of your manners and customs, your movements and modes of life, is inclined to think that he is listening to a grandmother's tale ! When, even after making a personal acquaintance with you, one returns home, one seems to think one had been to visit the paintings in an art gallery !

In this world of Maya, you are the real illusions, the mystery, the real mirage in the desert, you the upper classes of India ! You represent the past tense, with all its varieties of form jumbled into one. That one still seems to see you at the present time,

*Extract from 'Memoirs of European Travel' ('The Complete Works' Vol. VII)

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is nothing but a nightmare brought on by indigestion. You are the void, the unsubstantial nonentities of the future. Denizens of the dreamland, why are you loitering any longer ? Fleshless and bloodless skeletons of the dead body of Past India that you are, why do you not quickly reduce yourselves into dust and disappear in the air ?

Ay, on your bony fingers are some priceless rings of jewel, treasured up by your ancestors, and within the embrace of your stinking corpses are preserved a good many ancient treasure-chests. Up to now you have not had the opportunity to hand them over. Now under the British rule, in these days of free education and enlightenment, pass them on to your heirs, ay, do it as quickly as you can. You merge yourselves in the void and disappear, and let New India arise in your place.

Let her arise—out of the peasants' cottage, grasping the plough ; out of the huts of the fisherman, the cobbler and the sweeper. Let her spring from the grocer's shop, from beside the oven of the fritter-seller. Let her emanate from the factory, from marts and from markets. Let her emerge from groves and forests, from hills and mountains.

These common people have suffered oppression for thousands of years—suffered it without murmur, and as a result have got wonderful fortitude. They have suffered eternal misery, which has given them unflinching vitality. Living on a handful of grain, they can convulse the world ; give them only half a piece of bread, and the whole world will not be big enough to contain their energy ; they are endowed with the inexhaustible vitality of a Raktavija (A demon, in the Durga-Saptashati, every drop of whose blood falling on the ground produced another demon like him). And, besides, they have got the wonderful strength that comes of a pure and moral life, which is not to be found anywhere else in the world. Such peacefulness, such contentment, such love, such power of silent and incessant work, and such manifestation of lion's strength in times of action—where else will you find these !

Skeletons of the Past, there, before you, are your successors, the India that is to be. Throw those treasure-chests of yours and those jewelled rings among them, as soon as you can ; and

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you vanish into the air, and be seen no more—only keep your ears open. No sooner will you disappear than you will hear the inaugural shout of Renaissant India, ringing with the voice of a million thunders and reverberating throughout the universe, "Wah Guru Ki Fateh"—victory to the Guru !

* * *

WHAT A PERVERSION OF CHAITANYA'S 'DIVINE LOVE' !*

Shri Chaitanya was a man of tremendous renunciation and had nothing to do with woman and carnal appetites. But, in later times, his disciples admitted women into their order, mixed indiscriminately with them in his name and made an awful mess of the whole thing. And the ideal of love which the Lord exemplified in his life was perfectly selfless and bereft of any vestige of lust ; that sexless love can never be the property of the masses.

But the subsequent Vaishnava Gurus, instead of laying particular stress first on the aspect of renunciation in the Master's life, bestowed all their zeal on preaching and infusing his ideal of love among the masses, and the consequence was that the common people could not grasp and assimilate the high ideal of divine love, and naturally made of it the worst form of love between man and woman.

Look at this nation and see what has been the outcome of such an attempt. Through the preaching of that love broadcast, the whole nation has become effeminate—a race of women ! The whole of Orissa has been turned into a land of cowards ; and Bengal, running after the Radha-prema, these past four hundred years, has almost lost all sense of manliness ! The people are very good only at crying and weeping ; that has become their national trait. Look at their literature, the sure index of a nation's thoughts and ideas. Why, the refrain of the Bengali literature for these four hundred years is strung to that

*Extract from 'Conversations and Dialogues' ('The complete works' Vol. V)

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same tune of moaning and crying. It has failed to give birth to any poetry which breathes a true heroic spirit !

There can be no love so long as there is lust—even a speck of it, as it were, in the heart. None but men of great renunciation, none but mighty giants among men, have a right to that Love Divine. If that highest ideal of love is held out to the masses, it will indirectly tend to stimulate its worldly prototype which dominates the heart of man—for, meditating on love to God by thinking of oneself as His wife or beloved, one would very likely be thinking most of the time of one's own wife—the result is too obvious to point out.

* * *

YOU CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES ! IN THE NAME OF CHRIST, STOP REVILING HINDUISM*

It is not true that I am against any religion: It is equally untrue that I am hostile to the Christian missionaries in India. But I protest against certain of their methods of raising money in America. What is meant by those pictures in the school-books for children where the Hindu mother is painted as throwing her children to the crocodiles in the Ganga ? The mother is black, but the baby is painted white, to arouse more sympathy, and get more money. What is meant by those pictures which paint a man burning his wife at a stake with his own hands, so that she may become a ghost and torment the husband's enemy ? What is meant by the pictures of huge cars crushing over human beings ? The other day a book was published for children in this country, where one of these gentlemen tells a narrative of his visit to Calcutta. He says he saw a car running over fanatics in the streets of Calcutta. I have heard one of these gentlemen preach in Memphis that, in every village of India, there is a pond full of the bones of little babies.

What have the Hindus done to these disciples of Christ that every Christian child is taught to call the Hindus "vile", and

* Extract from 'Reply to the Madras Address' ('The Complete works' Vol. IV)

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"wretches", and the most horrible devils on earth ? Part of the Sunday School education for children here consists in teaching them to hate everybody who is not a Christian, and the Hindus especially, so that, from their very childhood, they may subscribe their pennies to the missions.

If not for truth's sake, for the sake of the morality of their own children, the Christian missionaries ought not to allow such things going on. Is it any wonder that such children grow up to be ruthless and cruel men and women ? The greater a preacher can paint the tortures of eternal hell—the fire that is burning there, the brimstone—the higher is his position among the orthodox. A servant-girl in the employ of a friend of mine had to be sent to a lunatic asylum as a result of her attending what they call here the revivalist-preaching. The dose of hell-fire and brimstone was too much for her. Look again at the books published in Madras against the Hindu religion. If a Hindu writes one such line against the Christian religion, the missionaries will cry fire and vengeance.

My countrymen, I have been more than a year in this country. I have seen almost every corner of the society, and, after comparing notes, let me tell you that neither are we devils, as the missionaries tell the world we are, nor are they angels, as they claim to be. The less the missionaries talk of immorality, infanticide, and the evils of the Hindu marriage system, the better for them. There may be actual pictures of some countries before which all the imaginary missionary pictures of the Hindu society will fade away into light. But my mission in life is not to be a paid reviler. I will be the last man to claim perfection for the Hindu society. No man is more conscious of the defects that are therein, or the evils that have grown up under centuries of misfortunes. If, foreign friends, you come with genuine sympathy to help and not to destroy, God-speed to you. But if by abuses, incessantly hurled against the head of a prostrate race in season and out of season, you mean only the triumphant assertion of the moral superiority of your own nation, let me tell you plainly, if such a comparison be instituted with any amount of justice, the Hindu will be found head and shoulders above all other nations in the world as a moral race.

* * *

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YOU CANNOT SERVE MAN AND MAMMON AT THE SAME TIME *

One thing I would tell you, and I do not mean any unkind criticism. You train and educate and clothe and pay men to do what ? To come over to my country to curse and abuse all my forefathers, my religion, and everything. They walk near a temple and say, "You idolators, you will go to hell". But they dare not do that to the Mohammedans of India ; the sword would be out. But the Hindu is too mild ; he smiles and passes on, and says, "Let the fools talk". That is the attitude.

And then you who train men to abuse and criticise, if I just touch you with the least bit of criticism, with the kindest of purpose, you shrink and cry, "Don't touch us ; we are Americans. We criticise all the people in the world, curse them and abuse them, say anything ; but do not touch us ; we are sensitive plants".

You may do whatever you please ; but at the same time I am going to tell you that we are content to live as we are ; and in one thing we are better off—we never teach our children to swallow such horrible stuff. ..... And whenever your ministers criticise us, let them remember this : *If all India stands up and takes all the mud that is at the bottom of the Indian Ocean and throws it up against the Western countries, it will not be doing an infinitesimal part of that which you are doing to us.* And what for ? Did we ever send one missionary to convert anybody in the world ? We say to you, "Welcome to your religion, but allow me to have mine".

You call yours an aggressive religion. You are aggressive, but how many have you taken ? Every sixth man in the world is a Chinese subject, a Buddhist ; then there are Japan, Tibet, and Russia, and Siberia, and Burma, and Siam ; and it may not be palatable, but this Christian morality, the Catholic Church is all derived from them. Well, and how was this done ? Without the shedding of one drop of blood ! With all your brags and boastings, where has your Christianity succeeded

* Extract from 'A lecture delivered at Detroit' ('The complete works' Vol. VIII).

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without the sword ? Show me one place in the whole world ; one, I say, throughout the history of the Christian religion—one ; I do not want two. I know how your forefathers were converted. They had to be converted or killed ; that was all.

What can you do better than Mohammedanism, with all your bragging ? "We are the only one !" And why ? "Because we can kill others." The Arabs said that ; they bragged. And where is the Arab now ? He is the Bedouin. The Romans used to say that, and where are they now ? Blessed are the peace-makers ; they shall enjoy the earth. Such things tumble down ; it is built upon sands ; it cannot remain long.

Everything that has selfishness for its basis, competition as its right hand, and enjoyment as its goal, must die sooner or later. Such things must die. Let me tell you, brethren, if you want to live, if you really want your nation to live, go back to Christ. You are not Christians. No, as a nation you are not. Go back to Christ. Go back to him who had nowhere to lay his head. "The birds have their nests and the beasts their lairs, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." Yours is religion preached in the name of luxury. What an irony of fate !

Reverse this if you want to live, reverse this. It is all hypocrisy that I have heard in this country. If this nation is going to live, let it go back to Him. You cannot serve God and Mammon at the same time. All this prosperity, all this from Christ ! Christ would have denied all such heresies. All prosperity which comes with Mammon is transient, is only for a moment. Real permanence is in Him. If you can join these two, this wonderful prosperity with the ideal of Christ, it is well. But if you cannot, better go back to him and give this up. Better be ready to live in rags with Christ than to live in palaces without him.

* * *

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MOHAMMED IS THE ONLY TRUE PROPHET—WHAT A NON-RELIGIOUS CLAIM !*

..... When each man stands and says "My Prophet is the only true Prophet," he is not correct—he knows not the alpha of religion. Religion is neither talk, nor theory, nor intellectual consent. It is realisation in the heart of our hearts ; it is touching God ; it is feeling, realising that I am a spirit in relation with the Universal Spirit and all Its great manifestations. If you have really entered the house of the Father, how can you have seen His children and not know them ? And if you do not recognise them, you have not entered the house of the Father. The mother recognises her child in any dress and knows him however disguised.

Recognise all the great, spiritual men and women in every age and country, and see that they are not really at variance with one another. Wherever there has been actual religion—this touch of the Divine, the soul coming in direct sense-contact with the Divine—there has always been a broadening of the mind which enables it to see the light everywhere.

Now, the Mohammedans are the crudest in this respect, and the most sectarian. Their watchword is : "There is one God, and Mohammed is His Prophet." Everything beyond that not only is bad, but must be destroyed forthwith ; at a moment's notice, every man or woman who does not exactly believe in that must be killed ; everything that does not belong to this worship must be immediately broken ; every book that teaches anything else must be burnt. From the Pacific to the Atlantic, for five hundred years blood ran all over the world. That is Mohammedanism !

* * *

* Extract from 'A lecture delivered at Pasadena, California' ('The complete works' Vol. IV)

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A RACE BOUND DOWN TO ITSELF !*

The more selfish a man, the more immoral he is. And so also with the race. That race which is bound down to itself has been the most cruel and the most wicked in the whole world. There has not been a religion that has clung to this dualism more than that founded by the Prophet of Arabia, and there has not been a religion which has shed so much blood and been so cruel to other men. In the Koran there is the doctrine that a man who does not believe these teachings should be killed ; it is a mercy to kill him ! And the surest way to get to heaven, where there are beautiful houris and all sorts of sense-enjoyments, is by killing these unbelievers. Think of the bloodshed there has been in consequence of such beliefs !

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*Extract from 'A lecture delivered in London' ('The complete works' Vol. II)

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PART FOUR

MAN-MAKING
OR
MOULDING OF 'WORKERS'

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MAN-MAKING
OR
MOULDING OF 'WORKERS'

We want fiery young men—intelligent and brave, who dare to go to the jaws of Death, and are ready to swim the ocean across. We want hundreds like that, both men and women. Try your utmost for that end alone. Make converts right and left, and put them into our purity-drilling machine. Start centres at places, go on always making converts.

A hundred thousand men and women, fired with the zeal of holiness, fortified with eternal faith in the Lord, and nerved to lion's courage by their sympathy for the poor and the fallen and the downtrodden, will go over the length and breadth of the land, preaching the gospel of salvation, the gospel of help, the gospel of social raising-up—the gospel of equality.

* * *

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ORGANISATION

Once he (Swamiji) said to my grandmother that he had the greatest temptation of his life in America. She liked to tease him a bit and said, "Who is she, Swami ?" He burst out laughing and said, "Oh, it is not a lady, it is *Organisation* !" He explained how the followers of Ramakrishna had all gone out alone and when they reached a village, would just quietly sit under a tree and wait for those in trouble to come to consult them. But in the States he saw how much could be accomplished by organising work. Yet he was doubtful about just what type of organisation would be acceptable to the Indian character and he gave a great deal of thought and study how to adapt what seemed good to him in our Western World to the best advantage of his own people. . . . .

(MISS CORNER)*

Prerequisites of democratic set-up

From my travels in various countries I have come to the conclusion that without organisation nothing great and parmanent can be done. But in a country like India, at our present stage of development—it does not seem to me well advised to start an organisation on a democratic basis in which every member has an equal voice, and decisions are arrived at by a majority of the votes of the community. With the West the

* Swami Vivekananda in America, New Discoveries.

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case is different,.....Amongst us also, when with the spread of education we shall learn to sacrifice, to stand above our individual interests and concerns, for the good of the community or the nation at large, then it would be possible to work on a democratic basis. Taking this into consideration, we should have for our organisation at present a Dictator whose orders everyone should obey. Then in the fullness of time, it will be guided by the opinion and consent of the members.*

* * *

Organisation of Hindus

An organisation that will teach the Hindus mutual help and appreciation is absolutely necessary. Five thousand people attended that meeting that was held in Calcutta, and hundreds did the same in other places, to express an appreciation of my work in America—well and good! But if you asked them each to give an anna, would they do it? The whole national character is one of childish dependence. They are all ready to enjoy food if it is brought to their mouth, and even some want it pushed down.....You do not deserve to live if you cannot help yourselves. .....

Three men cannot act in concert together in India for five minutes. Each one struggles for power and in the long run the whole organisation comes to grief. Lord! Lord! When will we learn not to be jealous!

In such a nation.....to create a band of men who are tied and bound together with a most undying love inspite of difference, is it not wonderful? This band will increase. This idea of wonderful liberality joined with eternal energy and progress must spread over India, it must electrify the whole nation and must enter the very pores of society inspite of the horrible ignorance, spite, caste-feeling, old boobyism, and jealousy which are the heritage of this nation of slaves.

* * *

Three stages of work

Each work has to pass through these stages—ridicule, opposition, and then acceptance. Each man who thinks ahead of his

* Addressing the disciples of Ramkrishna in a meeting on the eve of the foundation of the Ramkrishna Mission.

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time is sure to be misunderstood. So opposition and persecution are welcome, only I have to be steady and pure and must have immense faith in God, and all these will vanish. .....

Popularity hunting and real work seldom go together

No one ever succeeded in keeping society in good humour and at the same time did great works. One must work as the dictate comes from within, and then if it is right and good, society is bound to veer round, perhaps centuries after one is dead and gone. We must plunge heart and soul and body into the work. And until we be ready to sacrifice everything else to one *Idea* and to *One* alone, we *never*, *never* will see the Light.

Those that want to help mankind must take their own pleasure and pain, name and fame, and all sorts of interests, and make a bundle of them and throw them into the sea, and then come to the Lord—This is what all the masters said and *did*.

* * *

Implicit obedience

He who knows how to obey knows how to command. Learn obedience first. Among these Western nations, with such a high spirit of independence, the spirit of obedience is equally strong. We are all of us self-important—which never produces any work. Great enterprise, boundless courage, tremendous energy, and, above all, perfect obedience—these are the only traits that lead to individual and national regeneration. These traits are altogether lacking in us.

Everyone here wants to lead, and none to obey. In the doing of great works, the commands of the leader have to be implicitly obeyed. If my Gurubhais tell me now that I have to pass the rest of my life in cleansing the drain of the Math, know, for certain, that I shall obey that order without a word of protest. He only can be a great commander who knows how to obey, without a word of murmur, that which is for the general good.

Cultivate the virtue of obedience, but you must not sacrifice your own faith. No centralisation is possible unless there is obedience to superiors. No great work can be done without this centralisation of individual forces.

* * *

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Appreciate co-workers and point out mistakes gently

You must not throw cold water on anybody's project. Give up criticism altogether. Help all as long as you find they are doing all right, and in cases where they seem to be going wrong, show them their mistakes gently. It is criticising each other that is at the root of all mischief. That is the chief factor in breaking down organisations.....

Mutual love

The success of your undertakings depends wholely upon your mutual love. There is no good in store so long as malice and jealousy and egotism will prevail.....

Be always ready to concede to the opinions of your brethren, and try always to conciliate. That is the whole secret.

* * *

Business is business

All combined efforts in India sink under the weight of one iniquity—we have not yet developed strict business principles. Business is business, in the highest sense, and no friendship—or as a Hindu proverb says "eye-shame"—should be there. One should keep the clearest account of everything in one's charge—and never, never apply the funds intended for one thing to any other use whatsoever—even if one starves the next moment. This is business integrity.

* * *

Secret of perennial organisation

Set up such a machine as will go on automatically, no matter who dies or lives. We Indians suffer from a great defect, viz. we cannot make a permanent organisation—and the reason is that we never like to share power with others and never think of what will come after we are gone.

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LEADERSHIP

Purity of character

There is no allegiance possible where there is no character in the leader, and perfect purity ensures the most lasting allegiance and confidence.

Inborn quality of holding people together

A leader is not made in one life. He has to be born for it. For the difficulty is not in organisation and making plans, the test, the real test of a leader lies in holding widely different people together, along the line of their common sympathies. And this can only be done unconsciously, never by trying.

Service and love : prerequisites of leadership

It is a very difficult task to take on the role of a leader. One must be दासस्य दासः—a servant of servants, and must accommodate a thousand minds. He who is servant of all is their true master. There must not be a shade of jealousy or selfishness, then you are a leader. First, by birth, and secondly, unselfish—that's a leader.

Martial spirit is not self assertion, but self-sacrifice

...Where is that martial spirit which, at the very outset, requires one to know how to serve and obey, and to practise self-restraint ! The martial spirit is not self-assertion but self-sacrifice. One must be ready to advance and lay down one's life at the word of command, before he can command the hearts and lives of others. One must sacrifice himself first.

It is the leader who has to bear the brunt

Does the Indian soldier display any cowardice on the field of battle ? No, but they must have leaders. An English friend of mine, named General Strong, was in India during the Sepoy Mutiny. He used to tell many stories about it. One day, in the course of conversation, I asked him how it was that the sepoys who had enough of guns, ammunition, and provisions at their disposal, and were also trained veterans, came to suffer such a defeat. He replied that the leaders among them, instead

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of advancing forward, only kept shouting from a safe position in the rear, "Fight on, brave lads," and so forth ; but unless the commanding officer goes ahead and faces death, the rank and file will never fight with heart. It is the same in every branch. "A captain must sacrifice his head". If you can lay down your life for a cause, then only you can be a leader. But we all want to be leaders without making the necessary sacrifice. And the result is zero—nobody listens to us.

A leader has to be impartial and impersonal

Know partiality to be the chief cause of evil. That is to say, if you show towards any one more love than towards somebody else, rest assured, you will be sowing the seeds of future troubles.

He never becomes a leader in whose love there is a consideration of high or low. He whose love knows no end, and never stops to consider high or low, has the whole world lying at his feet.

I see persons giving me almost the whole of their love. But I must not give any one the whole of mine in return, for that day the work would be ruined. Yet there are some who will look for such a return, not having the breadth of the impersonal view. It is absolutely necessary to the work that I should have the enthusiastic love of as many as possible, while I myself remain entirely impersonal. Otherwise jealousy and quarrels would break up everything. A leader must be impersonal.

Uniting people and moulding them with sympathy and tolerance

If anybody comes to you to speak ill of any of his brothers, refuse to listen to him *in toto*. It is a great sin to listen even. In that lies the germ of future troubles.

Moreover, bear with everyone's shortcomings. Forgive offences by the million. And if you love all unselfishly, all will by degrees come to love one another. As soon as they fully understand that the interests of one depended upon those of others, everyone of them will give up jealousy. To do something conjointly is not in our very national character. Therefore you must try to inaugurate that spirit with the utmost care, and wait patiently.

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The best leader is he who 'leads like the baby'

Some people do the best work when *led.* Not every one is *born to lead.* The best leader, however, is one who "leads like the baby." The baby, though apparently depending on everyone, is the king of the household. At least, to my thinking, that is the secret.

The least show of leading destroys everything by rousing jealousy.

* * *

TRUE TEACHERSHIP

Teacher the transmitter

Those who give themselves up to the Lord do more for the world than all the so-called workers. One man who has purified himself thoroughly, accomplishes more than a regiment of preachers. *Out of purity and silence comes the word of power.*

Personality of a Teacher

The question was once asked to me in England by a friend, "Why should we look to the personality of a teacher ?—We have only to judge of what he says, and take that up." Not so. If a man wants to teach me something of dynamics or chemistry, or any other physical science, he may be of any character ; he can still teach dynamics, or any other science. For the knowledge that the physical sciences require is simply intellectual and depends on intellectual strength ; a man can have in such a case a gigantic intellectual power without the least development of his soul. But in the spiritual sciences it is impossible from first to last that there can be any spiritual light in that soul which is impure. What can such a soul teach ? It knows nothing. Spiritual truth is purity.

With the teacher of religion we must first and foremost see what he is, and then alone comes the value of the words, because he is the transmitter. What will he transmit, if

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he has not that spiritual power in him ? To give a simile : If a heater is hot, it can convey heat vibrations, but if not it is impossible to do so. Even so is the case with the mental vibrations of the religious teacher which he conveys to the mind of the taught. It is a question of transference, and not of stimulating only our intellectual faculties. Some power real and tangible, goes out from the teacher and begins to grow in the mind of the taught. Therefore the necessary condition is that the teacher must be true.

We hear most splendid orations, most wonderfully reasoned out discourses, and we go home and forget them all. At other times we hear a few words in the simplest language, and they enter into our lives, become part and parcel of ourselves and produce lasting results. The words of a man who can put his personality into them, take effect, but he must have tremendous personality. All teaching implies giving and taking, the teacher gives and the taught receives, but the one must have something to give, and the other must be open to receive.

Function of a teacher

1. Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man.

2. Religion is the manifestation of the Divinity already in man.

Therefore the only duty of the teacher in both cases is to remove all obstructions from the way. Hands off ! as I always say, and everything will be right. That is, our duty is to clear the way. The Lord does the rest.

Negative thoughts weaken man

Negative thoughts weaken man. Do you not find that where parents are constantly taxing their sons to read and write, telling them they will never learn anything, and calling them fools and so forth, the latter do actually turn out to be so in many cases. If you speak kind words to boys and encourage them, they are bound to improve in time. What holds good of children, also holds good of children in the region of higher thoughts. If you can give them positive ideas, people

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will grow up to be men and learn to stand on their own legs. In language and literature, in poetry and the arts, in everything we must point out not the mistakes that people are making in their thoughts and actions, but the way in which they will gradually be able to do these things better. Pointing out mistakes wounds a man's feelings. We have seen how Shri Ramakrishna would encourage even those whom we considered as worthless, and change the very course of their lives thereby ! His very method of teaching was a unique phenomenon.

* * *

SECRET OF REALLY SUCCESSFUL LIFE

OR

THE SCIENCE AND ART OF 'WORK'

Fill the brain and the heart with high ideal

Little manifestations of energy through the muscles are called work. But where there is no thought, there will be no work. Fill the brain, therefore, with high thoughts, highest ideals, place them day and night before you and out of that will come great work.

Every one can see the sky, even the very worm crawling upon the earth sees the blue sky, but how very far away it is ! So it is with our ideal. It is far away, no doubt, but at the same time, we know that we must have it. We must even have the highest ideal. Unfortunately in this life, the vast majority of persons are groping through this dark life without any ideal at all. If a man with an ideal makes a thousand mistakes, I am sure that the man without an ideal makes fifty thousand. Therefore, it is better to have an ideal. And this ideal we must hear about as much as we can, till it enters into our hearts, into our brains, into our very veins, until it tingles in every drop of our blood and permeates every pore in our body. We must meditate upon it. "Out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh," and out of the fulness of the heart the hand works too.

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Be like the pearl oyster

Be like the pearl oyster. There is a pretty Indian fable to the effect that if it rains when the star Swati is in the ascendant, and a drop of rain falls into an oyster, that drop becomes a pearl. The oysters know this, so they come to the surface when the star shines, and wait to catch the precious rain-drop. When a drop falls into them, quickly the oysters close their shells and dive down to the bottom of the sea, there to patiently develop the drop into the pearl.

We should be like that. First hear, then understand, and then, leaving all distractions, shut your minds to outside influences, and devote yourselves to developing the truth within you. There is the danger of frittering away your energies by taking up an idea only for its novelty, and then giving it up for another that is newer. Take one thing up and do it, and see the end of it, and before you have seen the end, do not give it up. He who can become mad with an idea, he alone sees light. Those that only take a nibble here and a nibble there will never attain anything. They may titillate their nerves for a moment, but there it will end. .....

..... Take up one idea. Make that one idea your life—think of it, dream of it, live on that idea. Let the brain, muscles, nerves, every part of your body be full of that idea, and just leave every other idea alone. This is the way to success, and this is the way great spiritual giants are produced. Others are mere talking machines.....

..... To succeed, you must have tremendous perseverence, tremendous will. "I will drink the ocean', says the persevering soul, "at my will mountains will crumble up." Have that sort of energy, that sort of will, work hard and you will reach the goal.

* * * *

Let Mahavira be the ideal

You have now to make the character of Mahavira your ideal. See how at the command of Ramachandra he crossed the ocean. He had no care for life or death ! He was a perfect master of his senses and wonderfully sagacious. You have now to build your life on this great ideal of personal service. Through

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that, all the other ideals will gradually manifest in life. Obedience to the Guru without questioning, and strict observance of Brahmacharya—this is the secret of success. As on the one hand Hanuman represents the ideal of service, so on the other he represents the leonine courage, striking the whole world with awe. He has not the least hesitation in sacrificing his life for the good of Rama. A supreme indifference to everything except the service of Rama, even to the attainment of the status of Brahma or Shiva, the great World-Gods ! Only the carrying out of Shri Rama's behest is the one vow of this life ! Such whole-hearted devotion is wanted.

* * * *

Seek and Ye shall find

A lazy tramp sauntering along the road saw an old man sitting at the door of his house and stopped to enquire of him the whereabouts of a certain place. "How far is such and such a village ?" he asked. The old man remained silent. The man repeated his query several times. Still there was no answer. Disgusted at this, the traveller turned to go away. The old man then stood up and said, "The village of—is only a mile from here." "What !" said the tramp, "Why did you not speak when I asked you before ?" "Because then," said the old man, "you seemed so halting and careless about proceeding, but now you are starting off in good earnest and you have a right to an answer".

Will you remember the story ? Go to work, the rest will come :

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।
तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥ (*Gita, IX 22*)

"Whosoever not trusting in any thing else but Me, rests on Me, I supply him with everything he needs".

..... Remember the words of Christ : "Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you". Those words are literally true, not figures or fiction. .....

..... Was there anything you did not get which you really wanted ? It could not be. For it is the want that creates the

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body. It is the light that has bored the holes, as it were, in your head, called the eyes. If the light had not existed you would have had no eyes. It is sound that had made the ears. The object of perception existed first, before you made the organ. .....

Ask and it shall be given

..... Of course, you must understand, there is a difference between desire and desire. .....

A disciple went to his master and said to him, "Sir, I want religion". The master looked at the young man, and did not speak, but only smiled. The young man came everyday, and insisted that he wanted religion. But the old man knew better than the young man. One day, when it was very hot, he asked the young man to go to the river with him and take a plunge. The young man plunged in, and the old man followed him and held the young man down under the water by force. After the young man had struggled for a while, he let him go and asked him what he wanted most while he was under the water. "A breath of air," the disciple answered. "Do you want God in that way ? If you do, you will get Him in a moment," said the master. Until you have that thirst, that desire, you cannot get religion, however you may struggle with your intellect, or your books, or your forms.

Feel like Buddha and you will be a Buddha

..... Do you feel for others ? If you do, you are growing in oneness. If you do not feel for others, you may be the most intellectual giant ever born, but you will be nothing ; you are but dry intellect, and you will remain so. .....

Do you know from the history of the world where the power of the Prophets lay ? Where was it ? In the intellect ? Did any of them write a fine book on philosophy, on the most intricate ratiocinations of logic ? Not one of them. They only spoke a few words. Feel like Christ and you will be a Christ, feel like Buddha and you will be a Buddha. It is feeling that is the life, the strength, the vitality, without which no amount of intellectual activity can reach God. Intellect is like limbs without the power of locomotion. It is only when feeling enters and gives them motion that they move and work on

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others. That is so all over the world, and it is a thing which you must always remember. .....

Valmiki's first verse sprang out of intense feeling of pity

..... One day as the sage, Valmiki, was going to bathe in the holy river Ganga, he saw a pair of doves wheeling round and round, and kissing each other. The sage looked up and was pleased at the sight, but in a second an arrow whisked past him and killed the male dove. As the dove fell down on the ground, the female dove went on whirling round and round the dead body of its companion in grief. In a moment the poet became miserable, and looking round, he saw the hunter. "Thou art a wretch," he cried, "without the smallest mercy ! Thy slaying hand would not even stop for love !"

मा निषाद प्रतिष्ठां त्वमगमः शाश्वतीः समाः ।
यत्क्रौञ्चमिथुनादेकमवधीः काममोहितम् ॥

(*V. Ramayana : Balakanda*)

"What is this ? What am I saying ?" the poet thought to himself, "I have never spoken in this sort of way before". And then a voice came ; "Be not afraid. This is poetry that is coming out of your mouth. Write the life of Rama in poetic language for the benefit of the World". And that is how the poem first began. The first verse sprang out of pity from the mouth of Valmiki, the first poet. And it was after that, that he wrote the beautiful Ramayana, "The life of Rama".

* * * *

Right attitude

..... All the work you do is subjective, is done for your own benefit. God has not fallen into a ditch for you and me to help Him out, by building a hospital or something of that sort. He *allows* you to work. He allows you to exercise your muscles in this great gymnasium, not in order to help Him but that you may help yourself. Do you think even an ant will die for want of your help ? Most arrant blasphemy ! .....

..... Blessed are we that we are given the privilege of working for Him, not of helping Him. Cut out this word "help" from your mind. You cannot help ; it is blaspheming. .....

..... We are allowed to worship Him. Stand in that reverent attitude to the whole universe, and then will come perfect non-

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attachment. This should be your duty. This is the proper attitude of work. This is the secret taught by Karma-Yoga.

* * * *

Happiest is he who works unselfishly

The beggar is never happy. The beggar only gets a dole with pity and scorn behind it, at least with the thought behind that the beggar is a low object. He never really enjoys what he gets.

We are all beggars. Whatever we do, we want a return. We are all traders. We are traders in life, we are traders in virtue, we are traders in religion. Alas ! we are also traders in love.

If you come to trade, if it is a question of give-and-take, if it is a question of buy-and-sell, abide by the laws of buying and selling. There is a bad time and there is a good time ; there is a rise, and a fall in prices : always you expect the blow to come. It is like looking at the mirror. Your face is reflected : you make a grimace—there is one in the mirror ; if you laugh, the mirror laughs. This is buying and selling, giving and taking.

We get caught. How ? Not by what we give, but by what we expect. We get misery in return for our love ; not from the fact that we love, but from the fact that we want love in return. There is no misery where there is no want. Desire, want, is the father of all misery. Desires are bound by the laws of success and failure. Desires must bring misery.

..... Ninety-nine percent of the Sadhus, even after renouncing lust and wealth, get bound at last by the desire of name and fame. "Fame ..... that last infirmity of noble mind"—haven't you read ? .....

..... Nothing is easier to say, "I work for work's sake", but nothing is so difficult to attain. I would go twenty miles on my hands and knees to look on the face of the man who can work for work's sake. There is a motive somewhere. If it is not money, it is power. If it is not power, it is gain. Somehow, somewhere, there is a motive power. .....

..... This kind of work for a motive brings misery. That work alone brings unattachment and bliss, wherein we work as masters of our own minds.

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He works best who works unselfishly

..... Many have said that without motives you cannot work. They have never seen unselfish work except under the influence of fanaticism, and, therefore, they speak in that way.

..... He works best who works without any motive, neither for money, nor for fame, nor for anything else ; and when a man can do that, he will be a Buddha, and out of him will come the power to work in such a manner as will transform the world. This man represents the very highest ideal of Karma-Yoga.

..... Buddha is the only prophet who said, "I do not care to know your various theories about God. What is the use of discussing all the subtle doctrines about the soul ? Do good and be good. And this will take you to freedom and to whatever truth there is". He was, in the conduct of his life, absolutely without personal motives, and what man worked more than he ? Show me in history one character who has soared so high above all. .....

..... He is the ideal Karma-Yogi, acting entirely without motive, and the history of humanity shows him to have been the greatest man ever born ; beyond compare the greatest combination of heart and brain that ever existed, the greatest soul-power that has ever been manifested. .....

..... The sun is taking up water from the ocean to return it in showers. You are a machine for taking and giving : you take, in order to give. Ask, therefore, nothing in return ; but the more you give, the more will come to you. The quicker you can empty the air out of this room, the quicker it will be filled up by the external air ; and if you close all the doors and every aperture, that which is within will remain, but that which is outside will never come in, and that which is within will stagnate, degenerate, and become poisoned. A river is continually emptying itself into the ocean and is continually filling up again. Bar not the exit into the ocean. The moment you do that, death seizes you.

* * * *

He succeeds most who works unselfishly

It is only work that is done as a free-will offering to the humanity and to nature that does not bring with it any binding attachment.

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The man who works through freedom and love cares nothing for results. But the slave wants his whipping; the servant wants his pay. So with all life; take for instance the public life. The public speaker wants a little applause or a little hissing and hooting. If you keep him in a corner without it, you will kill him, for he requires it. This is working through slavery. To expect something in return, under such conditions, becomes second nature.

Every successful man must have behind him somewhere tremendous integrity, tremendous sincerity, and that is the cause of his signal success in life. He may not have been perfectly unselfish; yet he was tending towards it. If he had been perfectly unselfish, his could have been as great a success as that of the Buddha or of the Christ. The degree of unselfishness marks the degree of success everywhere.

The great secret of true success, of true happiness, then, is this: the man who asks for no return, the perfectly unselfish man, is the most successful. It seems to be a paradox. Do we not know that every man who is unselfish in life gets cheated, gets hurt? Apparently, yes. "Christ was unselfish, and yet he was crucified". True, but we know that his unselfishness is the reason, the cause of a great victory—the crowning of millions upon millions of lives with the blessings of true success.

* * * *

Get rid of the puny 'I'

The consciousness that I am doing this and that, is never present when one works through Yoga. The Western people do not understand this. They say that if there be no consciousness of ego, if this ego is gone, how then can a man work? But when one works with concentration, losing all consciousness of oneself, the work that is done will be infinitely better, and this everyone may have experienced in his own life.

We perform many works subconsciously, such as the digestion of food, etc., many others consciously, and others again by becoming immersed in Samadhi as it were, when there is no consciousness of the smaller ego.

If the painter, losing the consciousness of his ego, becomes completely immersed in his painting, he will be able to produce

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masterpieces. ..... He who is one with the Lord through Yoga performs all his work by becoming immersed in concentration, and does not seek any personal benefit. Such a performance of work brings only good to the world, no evil can come out of it. ..... The Gita teaches that all works should be done thus.

..... The adamantine wall that shuts us in is egoism ; we refer everything to ourselves, thinking I do this, that and the other. Get rid of this puny "I" ; kill this diabolism in us ; "not I but Thou"—say it, feel it, live it. Until we give up the world manufactured by the ego, never can we enter the kingdom of heaven. .....

..... The power is with the silent ones, who only live and love and then withdraw their personality. They never say "me" and "mine" ; they are only blessed in being instruments. Such men are the makers of *Christs* and *Buddhas*. .....

..... They are all principle, no personality.

..... *The Lord has hidden Himself best, and His work is best : so he who hides himself best, accomplishes most. Conquer yourself and the whole universe is yours.*

* * * *

Secret of Fortune

..... Unto him comes everything who does not care for anything. Fortune is like a flirt ; she cares not for him who wants her. ..... Money comes and showers itself upon one who does not care for it ; so does fame come in abundance, until it is a trouble and a burden. They always come to the Master. The slave never gets anything. The Master is he who can live in spite of them, whose life does not depend upon the little, foolish things of the world. Live for an ideal, and that one ideal alone. Let it be so great, so strong, that there may be nothing else left in the mind ; no place for anything else, no time for anything else.

* * * *

Pay equal attention to means

One of the greatest lessons I have learned in my life is to pay as much attention to the means of work as to its end. ..... All the secret of success is there ; to pay as much attention to the means as to the end.

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Our great defect in life is that we are so much drawn to the ideal, the goal is so much enchanting, so much more alluring, so much bigger in our mental horizon, that we lose sight of the details altogether.

But whenever failure comes, if we analyse it critically, in ninety-nine per cent of cases we shall find that it was because we did not pay attention to the means. Proper attention to the finishing, strengthening, of the means, is what we need. With the means all right, the end must come. We forget that it is the cause that produces the effect ; the effect cannot come by itself ; and unless the causes are exact, proper, and powerful, the effect will not be produced. Once the ideal is chosen and the means determined, we may almost let go the ideal, because we are sure it will be there, when the means are perfected. When the cause is there, there is no more difficulty about the effect, the effect is bound to come. If we take care of the cause, the effect will take care of itself. The realisation of the ideal is the effect. The means are the cause, attention to the means, therefore, is the great secret of life. .....

* * * *

Worship-room not 'all in all'

But there is one thing to know : Great sages come with special messages for the world, and not for name, but their followers throw their teachings overboard and fight over their names—this is verily the history of the world. I do not take into any consideration whether people accept his (Shri Ramakrishna's) name or not, but I am ready to lay down my life to help his teachings, his life, and his message spread all over the world. What I am most afraid of is the worship-room. It is not bad in itself, but there is a tendency in some to make this all in all and set up that old-fashioned nonsense over again —this is what makes me nervous. I know why they busy themselves with those old, effete ceremonials. Their spirit craves for work, but having no outlet they waste their energy in ringing bells and all that.

* * * *

Do not be a bigot

A monk of India said, "I would believe you if you were to say that I could press the sands of the desert and get oil, or

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that I could pluck the tooth from the mouth of the crocodile without being bitten, but I cannot believe you when you say a bigot can be changed."

A proverbial bigot

..... The Vaishanavas in India, who are dualists, are a most intolerant sect. Among the Shaivas, another dualistic sect, the story is told of a devotee by the name of Ghantakarna, or the Bell-eared, who was so devout a worshipper of Shiva that he did not wish even to hear the name of any other deity ; so he wore two bells tied to his ears in order to drown the sound of any voice uttering other Divine names. On account of his intense devotion to Shiva the latter wanted to teach him that there was no difference between Shiva and Vishnu, so He appeared before him as half Vishnu and half Shiva. At that moment the devotee was waving incence before Him, but so great was the bigotry of Ghantakarna that when he saw the fragrance of the incence entering the nostril of Vishnu, he thrust his finger into it to prevent the god from enjoying the sweet smell.

* * * *

Do not be a fanatic

There are fanatics of various kinds. Some people are wine fanatics, and cigar fanatics. Some think that if men gave up smoking cigars, the world would arrive at the millenium. ..... There are some fanatics in India who think that if a woman could marry again when her husband died, it would cure all evil. This is fanaticism.

When I was a boy I thought that fanaticism was a great element in work, but now, as I grow older, I find out that it is not.

..... There may be a man who goes about cheating people ; there is no trusting him ; no woman is safe with him. But perhaps this scoundrel does not drink wine. If so, he sees nothing good in any one who drinks wine. All these wicked things that he himself does are of no consideration. This is only natural human selfishness and one-sidedness.

In ninety cases out of hundred, fanatics must have bad livers, or they are dyspeptics, or in some way diseased. By degrees

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even physicians will find out that fanaticism is a kind of disease. I have seen plenty of it. The Lord save me from it !

My experience comes to this, that it is rather wise to avoid all sorts of fanatical reforms. The world is slowly going on ; let it go slowly. Why are we in a hurry ? Sleep well and keep your nerves in good order ; eat right food, and have sympathy with the world. Fanatics only make hatred. .....

..... When you come out of the company of the fanatics you may learn how really to love and sympathise. And the more you attain of love and sympathy, the less will be your power to condemn these poor creatures ; you will sympathise with their faults.

..... There was once a king who hearing that the prince of a neighbouring territory was advancing upon his capital to lay seige to it, held a council, calling all the people for advice as to how to defend the country from the enemy. The engineers advised the building of a high earthen mound with a huge trench all around the capital ; the carpenters proposed the construction of a wooden wall ; the shoe-makers suggested that the same wall be built of leather, for 'there is nothing like leather,' they said. But the blacksmiths shouted out that they were all wrong, and that the wall should be built of iron. And then came in the lawyers with the argument that the best way to defend the State was to tell the enemy in a legal way that they were in the wrong and out of court in attempting to confiscate another's property. Finally came the priests, who laughed them all to scorn, saying, 'You are all talking like lunatics ! First of all the gods must be propitiated with sacrifices, and then only can we be invincible.' Instead of defending their kingdom they argued and fought among themselves. Meanwhile the enemy advanced, stormed and sacked the city. Even so are men.

* * * *

Give up all weakness and superstition

..... This I lay down as the first essential in all I teach : anything that brings spiritual, mental, or physical weakness, touch it not with the toes of your feet. Religion is the manifestation of the natural strength that is in man. A spring of infinite power

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is coiled up and is inside this little body, and that spring is spreading itself. And as it goes on spreading, body after body is found insufficient, it throws them off and takes higher bodies. This is the history of man, of religion, civilisation or progress....

..... You will find that astrology and all these mystical things are generally signs of a weak mind, therefore as soon as they are becoming prominent in our minds we should see a physician, take good food and rest.

There is an old story of an astrologer who came to a king and said, "you are going to die in six months." The king was frightened out of his wits, and was almost about to die then and there from fear. But his minister was a clever man, and this man told the king that these astrologers were fools. The king would not believe him. So the minister saw no other way to make the king see that they were fools but to invite the astrologer to the palace again. There he asked him if his calculations were correct. The astrologer said that there could not be a mistake, but to satisfy him he went through the whole of the calculations again and then said that they were perfectly correct. The king's face became livid. The minister said to the astrologer, "And when do you think you will die ?" "In twelve years," was the reply. The minister quickly drew his sword and separated the astrologer's head from the body and said to the king, "Do you see this liar ? He is dead this moment."

* * * *

Face the hardships boldly

..... Once when I was in Varanasi, I was passing through a place where there was a large tank of water on one side and a high wall on the other. It was in the grounds where there were many monkeys. The monkeys of Varanasi are huge brutes and are sometimes surly. They now took it into their heads not to allow me to pass through their street, so they howled and shrieked and clutched at my feet as I passed. As they pressed closer, I began to run, but the faster I ran, the faster came the monkeys and they began to bite at me. It seemed impossible to escape, but just then I met a stranger who called out to me, "Face the brutes". I turned and faced the monkeys, and they fell back and finally fled. That is a lesson for all life—

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face the terrible, face it boldly. Like the monkeys the hardships of life fall back when we cease to flee before them. .....

Two sorts of courage

There are two sorts of courage. One is the courage of facing the cannon. And the other is the courage of spiritual conviction. An Emperor, who invaded India, was told by his teacher to go and see some of the sages there. After a long search for one, he found a very old man sitting on a block of stone. The Emperor talked with him a little and became very much impressed by his wisdom. He asked the sage to go to his country with him. "No," said the sage, "I am quite satisfied with my forest here." Said the Emporor, "I will give you money, position, wealth. I am the Emperor of the world." "No", replied the man, "I don't care for those things." The Emperor replied, "If you do not go, I will kill you." The man smiled serenely and said, "*That is the most foolish thing you ever said, Emperor. You cannot kill me. Me the sun cannot dry, fire cannot burn, sword cannot kill, for I am the birthless, the deathless, the ever-living omnipotent, omnipresent Spirit.*" This is spiritual boldness, while the other is the courage of a lion or a tiger. .....

* * * *

Be brave and generous

I once read a story about some ships that were caught in a cyclone in the South Sea Islands, and there was a picture of it in the *Illustrated London News*. All of them were wrecked except one English vessel, which weathered the storm. The picture showed the men who were going to be drowned, standing on the decks and cheering the people who were sailing through the storm. Be brave and generous like that. Do not drag others down to where you are. .....

* * * *

Endure willingly

..... If you are really ready to take the world's burden, take it by all means. But do not let us hear your groans and curses. Do not frighten us with your sufferings, so that we come to feel that we are better off with our own burdens. The man who really takes the burden blesses the world and goes his own way. He has not a word of condemnation, a word of criticism,

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not because there was no evil but that he has taken it on his own shoulders willingly, voluntarily. It is the Saviour who should "go his way rejoicing, and not the saved."

Neither seek nor avoid, take what comes. It is liberty to be affected by nothing ; do not merely endure, be unattached. .....Pleasure will come—good : who forbids ? Pain will come : welcome that too. Remember the story of the bull. A mosquito sat long on the horn of a certain bull. Then his conscience troubled him and he said, "Mr. Bull, I have been sitting here a long time, perhaps I annoy you. I am sorry, I will go away." But the bull replied, "Oh, no, not at all ! Bring your whole family and live on my horn ; what can you do to me ?"

Why can we not say that to misery ? .....

* * * *

Mistakes and Failures—angels unawares

It is thought which is the propelling force in us. Fill the mind with the highest thoughts, hear them day after day, think them month after month. Never mind failures ; they are quite natural, they are the beauty of life, these failures. What would life be without them ? It would not be worth having if it were not for struggles. Where would be the poetry of life ? Never mind the struggles, the mistakes. I never heard a cow tell a lie, but it is only a cow—never a man. So never mind these failures, these little backsidings ; hold the ideal a thousand times, and if you fail a thousand times, make the attempt once more. ...

There is nothing that is absolutely evil. The devil has a place here as well as God, else he would not be here. .....

..... Our mistakes have places here. Go on ! Do not look back if you think you have done something that is not right. Now, do you believe you could be what you are today, had you not made those mistakes before ? Bless your mistakes, then. They have been angels unawares. Blessed be torture ! Blessed be happiness ! Do not care what be your lot. Hold on to the ideal. March on ! Do not look back upon little mistakes and things. In this battlefield of ours, the dust of mistakes must be raised. Those who are so thin-skinned that they cannot bear the dust, let them get out of the ranks.

* * * *

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Know your divinity

I was once travelling in the Himalayas and the long road stretched before us. We poor monks cannot get any one to carry us, so we had to make all the way on foot. There was an old man with us. The way goes up and down for hundreds of miles, and when that old monk saw what was before him, he said, "Oh, sir, how to cross it ; I cannot walk any more ; my chest will break." I said to him, "Look down at your feet." He did so, and I said, "The road that is under your feet is the road that you have passed over and is the same road that you see before you ; it will soon be under your feet." The highest things are under your feet, because you are Divine Stars ; all these things are under your feet. You can swallow the stars by the handful if you want ; such is your real nature. Be strong, get beyond all superstitions, and be free.

* * * *

Silent and steady work

..... Any one will be great in a great position ! Even the coward will grow brave in the glare of the footlights. The world looks on. Whose heart will not throb ? Whose pulse will not quicken, till he can do his best ? More and more the true greatness seems to me that of the worm, doing its duty silently, steadily, from moment to moment, and hour to hour.

..... A little squirrel, so it is said, was there rolling himself in the sand and running backwards and forwards on to the bridge and shaking himself. Thus in his small way he was working for the bridge of Rama by putting in sand. The monkeys laughed, for they were bringing whole mountains, whole forests, huge loads of sand for the bridge—so they laughed at the little squirrel rolling in the sand and then shaking himself. But Rama saw it and remarked : "Blessed be the little squirrel ; he is doing his work to the best of his ability, and he is therefore quite as great as the greatest of you." Then he gently stroked the squirrel on the back, and the marks of Rama's fingers running lengthways, are seen on the squirrel's back to this day.

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Every duty is holy

Every duty is holy, and devotion to duty is the highest form of the worship of God. .....

By doing well the duty which is nearest to us, the duty which is in our hands now, we make ourselves stronger ; and improving our strength in this manner step by step, we may even reach a state in which it shall be our privilege to do the most coveted and honoured duties in life and in society.

We all find ourselves in the position for which we are fit, each ball has its own hole ; and if one has some capacity above another, the world will find that out too, in this universal adjusting that goes on. So it is no use to grumble. There may be a rich man who is wicked, yet there must be in that man certain qualities that made him rich ; and if any other man has the same qualities, he will also become rich. What is the use of fighting and complaining ? That will not help us to better things.

Grumble not your lot : relish every duty

..... He who grumbles at the little thing that has fallen to his lot to do, will grumble at everything. Always grumbling, he will lead a miserable life, and everything will be a failure. But that man who does his duty as he goes, putting his shoulder to the wheel, will see the light, and higher and higher duties will fall to his share.

It is the worker who is attached to results that grumbles about the nature of the duty which has fallen to his lot, to the unattached worker all duties are equally good, and form efficient instruments with which selfishness and sensuality may be killed, and the freedom of the soul secured. .....

..... To the grumbler all duties are distasteful ; nothing will ever satisfy him, and his whole life is doomed to prove a failure. Let us work on, doing as we go whatever happens to be our duty, and being ever ready to put our shoulders to the wheel. Then surely shall we see the light !

..... No work is petty. ..... Even the greatest fool can accomplish a task if it be after his heart. But the intelligent man is he who can convert every work into one that suits his taste.

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Everything in this world is like a banyan-seed, which though appearing tiny as a mustard-seed, has yet the gigantic banyan tree latent within it. He indeed is intelligent who notices this and succeeds in making all work truly great.

Blame not others : analyse yourself

..... We must learn that nothing can happen to us, unless we make ourselves susceptible to it. ..... No disease can come to me until the body is ready ; it does not depend alone on the germs, but upon a certain predisposition which is already in the body. We get only that for which we are fitted. Let us give up our pride and understand this, that never is misery undeserved. There never has been a blow undeserved ; there never has been an evil for which I did not pave the way with my own hands. We ought to know that.

Analyse yourselves and you will find that every blow you have received, came to you because you prepared yourselves for it. You did half, and the external world did the other half ; that is how the blow came. That will sober us down. At the same time, from this very analysis will come a note of hope and the note of hope is : "I have no control of the external world, but that which is in me and nearer unto me, my own world, is in my control. If the two together are required to make a failure, if the two together are necessary to give me a blow, I will not contribute the one which is in my keeping ; and how then can the blow come ? If I get real control of myself, the blow will never come."

..... Therefore, blame none for your own faults, stand upon your own feet, and take the whole responsibility upon yourselves. Say, "This misery that I am suffering is of my own doing, and that very thing proves that it will have to be undone by me alone." That which I created, I can demolish ; that which is created by some one else I shall never be able to destroy. Therefore, stand up, be bold, be strong. Take the whole responsibility on your own shoulders, and know that you are the creator of your own destiny. All the strength and succour you want is within yourselves. Therefore, make your own future. "Let the dead past bury its dead." The infinite future is before you, and you must always remember that each word, thought, and

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deed, lays up a store for you and that as the bad thoughts and bad works are ready to spring upon you like tigers so also there is the inspiring hope that the good thoughts and good deeds are ready with the power of a hundred thousand angels to defend you always and for ever.

We make our own destiny

..... No one can get anything unless he earns it. This is an eternal law. We may sometimes think it is not so, but in the long run we become convinced of it. A man may struggle all his life for riches ; he may cheat thousands, but he finds at last that he did not deserve to become rich, and his life becomes a trouble and a nuisance to him. We may go on accumulating things for our physical enjoyment, but only what we earn is really ours. A fool may buy all the books in the world, and they will be in his library ; but he will be able to read only those that he deserves to ; and his deserving is produced by Karma.

Our Karma determines what we deserve and what we can assimilate. We are responsible for what we are ; and whatever we wish ourselves to be, we have the power to make ourselves. If what we are now has been the result of our own past actions, it certainly follows that whatever we wish to be in future can be produced by our present actions ; so we have to know how to act. .....

* * * *

All help comes from within

..... We are like silk-worms. We make the thread out of our own substance and spin the cocoon, and in course of time, are imprisoned inside. But this is not for ever. In that cocoon we shall develop spiritual realisation, and like the butterfly come out free. This network of Karma we have woven around ourselves ; and in our ignorance we feel as if we are bound, and weep and wail for help. But help does not come from without ; it comes from within ourselves. Cry to all the gods in the universe. I cried for years, and in the end I found that I was helped. But help came from within. And I had to undo what I had done by mistake. That is the only way. I had to cut the net which I had thrown round myself, and the power to do this is within.

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Of this I am certain that not one aspiration, well-guided or ill-guided, in my life, has been in vain, but I am the resultant of all my past, both good and evil. I have committed many mistakes in my life, but mark you, I am sure of this that without every one of those mistakes I should not be what I am today, and so am quite satisfied to have made them. I do not mean that you are to go home and wilfully commit mistakes ; do not misunderstand me in that way. But do not mope because of the mistakes you have committed, but know that in the end all will come out straight. It cannot be otherwise, because goodness is our nature, purity is our nature, and that nature can never be destroyed. Our essential nature always remains the same.

* * * *

How to establish good character

..... Man is, as it were, a centre, and is attracting all the powers of the universe towards himself, and in this centre is fusing them all and again sending them off in a big current. .....

..... Good and bad, misery and happiness, all are running towards him and clinging round him ; and out of them he fashions the mighty stream of tendency called character and throws it outwards. As he has the power of drawing in anything, so has he the power of throwing it out.

..... If a man continuously hears bad words, thinks bad thoughts, does bad actions, his mind will be full of bad impressions ; and they will influence his thought and work without his being conscious of the fact. In fact, these bad impressions are always working, and their resultant must be evil, and that man will be a bad man ; he cannot help it. The sum total of these impressions in him will create the strong motive power for doing bad actions. He will be like a machine in the hands of the impressions, and they will force him to do evil.

Similarly if a man thinks good thoughts and does good works, the sum total of these impressions will be good ; and they, in a similar manner will force him to do good even inspite of himself. When a man has done so much good work and thought so many good thoughts there is an irresistible tendency in him to do good, inspite of himself and even if he wishes to

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do evil, his mind, as the sum total of his tendencies, will not allow him to do so ; the tendencies will turn him back ; he is completely under the influence of the good tendencies. When such is the case, a man's good character is said to be established.

..... A man plays a tune on a piano, he places each finger on each key consciously. He repeats this process till the movement of the fingers becomes a habit. He then plays a tune without having to pay special attention to each particular key. Similarly, we find in regard to ourselves that our tendencies are the result of past conscious actions. .....

* * * *

Power of self-restraint

..... When we let loose our feelings, we waste so much energy, shatter our nerves, disturb our minds, and accomplish very little work. The energy which ought to have gone out as work is spent as mere feeling, which counts for nothing. It is only when the mind is very calm and collected that the whole of its energy is spent in doing good work. And if you read the lives of the great workers which the world has produced, you will find that they were wonderfully calm men. Nothing, as it were, could throw them off their balance. That is why the man who becomes angry never does a great amount of work, and the man whom nothing can make angry accomplishes so much. The man who gives way to anger, or hatred, or any other passion, cannot work ; he only breaks himself to pieces, and does nothing practical. It is the calm, forgiving, equable, well-balanced mind that does the greatest amount of work.

Every wave of passion restrained is a balance in your favour. It is therefore good *policy* not to return anger for anger, as with all true morality. Christ said, "Resist not evil", and we do not understand it until we discover that it is not only moral but actually the best policy, for anger is loss of energy to the man who displays it. You should not allow your minds to come into those brain-combinations of anger and hatred.

..... A carriage with four horses may rush down a hill unrestrained, or the coachman may curb the horses. Which is the greater manifestation of power, to let them go or to hold them ? A cannon-ball flying through the air goes a long distance and falls. Another is cut short in its flight by striking against

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a wall, and the impact generates intense heat. All outgoing energy following a selfish motive is frittered away ; it will not cause power to return to you ; but if restrained, it will result in development of power. This self-control will tend to produce a mighty will, a character which makes a Christ or a Buddha. .....

..... When a big wave of anger has come into the mind, how are we to control that ? Just by raising an opposing wave. Think of love. Sometimes a mother is very angry with her husband, and while in that state the baby comes in, and she kisses the baby ; the old wave dies out and a new wave arises, love for the child. That suppresses the other one. Love is opposite to anger. Similarly, when the idea of stealing comes, non-stealing should be thought of ; when the idea of receiving gifts comes, replace it by a contrary thought.

..... The ideal man is he who, in the midst of the greatest silence and solitude, finds the intensest activity, and in the midst of intensest activity finds the silence and solitude of the desert. He has learned the secret of restraint, he has controlled himself. He goes through the streets of a big city with all its traffic, and his mind is as calm as if he were in a cave, where not a sound could reach him ; and he is intensely working all the time. That is the ideal of Karma-Yoga, and if you have attained to that you have really learned the secret of work.

* * * *

The power of true thoughts

..... In the life of Gautama Buddha we notice him constantly saying that he is the twenty-fifth Buddha. The twenty-four before him are unknown to history, although the Buddha known to history must have built upon foundations laid by them.

The highest men are calm, silent, and unknown. They are the men who really know the power of thought ; they are sure that, even if they go into a cave and close the door and simply think five true thoughts and then pass away, these five thoughts of their will live through eternity. Indeed such thoughts will penetrate through the mountains, cross the oceans, and travel through the world. They will enter deep into human hearts and brains and raise up men and women who will give them practical expression in the workings of human life.

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You must be Rishis yourselves

You must not merely learn what the Rishis taught. Those Rishis are gone, and their opinions are also gone with them. You must be Rishis yourselves. You are also men as much as the greatest men that were ever born—even our Incarnations. What can mere book-learning do ? What can meditation do even ? What can the Mantras and Tantras do ? You must stand on your own feet.

* * * *

The true Man

You must have this new method—the method of manmaking. The true *man* is he who is strong as strength itself and yet possesses a woman's heart. You must feel for the millions of beings around you, and yet you must be strong and inflexible, and you must also possess obedience ; though it may seem a little paradoxical—you must possess these apparently conflicting virtues. If your superior orders you to throw yourself into a river and catch a crocodile, you must first obey and then reason with him. Even if the order be wrong, first obey and then contradict it.

The bane of sects, ... is that if any one happens to have a different opinion, he immediately starts a new sect, he has no patience to wait. So you must have a deep regard for your Sangha. There is no place for disobedience here. ..... There must not be any traitors in the camp. You must be as free as the air, and as obedient as this plant and the dog.

Sanyasins, the need of the hour

Let a few stand out and live for God alone and save religion for the world. ..... If you give up, stand fast. If a hundred fall in the fight, seize the flag and carry it on. God is true for all that, no matter who fails. Let him who falls hand on the flag to another to carry on ; it can never fall.

..... What will the poor householders, do, with their little bits of life ? It is for the Sannyasins, Shiva's demons, to rend the skies with their shouts of "Hara ! Hara ! Shambho !"

..... My hope of the future lies in the youths of character intelligent, renouncing all for the service of others, and obedient

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—who can sacrifice their lives in working out my ideas and thereby do good to themselves and the country at large. Otherwise, boys of the common run are coming in groups and will come. Dullness is written on their faces—their hearts are devoid of energy, their bodies feeble and unfit for work and minds devoid of courage. What work will be done by these ? If I get ten or twelve boys with the faith of Nachiketa, I can turn the thoughts and pursuits of this country in a new channel.

Among those who appear to me to be of good calibre, some have bound themselves by matrimony ; some have sold themselves for the acquisition of worldly name, fame, or wealth ; while some are of feeble bodies. The rest, who form the majority, are unable to receive any high idea. .....

..... Of course, ... by the will of God, from among these very boys may arise in time great heroes of work and spirituality who will in future work out my ideas.

* * * *

Organise educated young men

Act on the educated young men, bring them together, and organise them. Great things can be done by great sacrifices only. ..... Work, work the idea, the plan, ... my brave, noble, good souls—to the wheel, to the wheel put your shoulders ! Stop not to look back for name, or fame, or any such nonsense. Throw self overboard and work. Remember, "The grass when made into a rope by being joined together can even chain a mad elephant."

* * * *

My prayer to Shri Ramakrishna

Now I pray to that World-teacher, Shri Ramakrishna, the Preacher of the gospel of Universal Synthesis, to manifest himself in the region of your heart, so that, having attained the consummation of your desires, you may with an undaunted heart try your best to deliver others from this dreadful ocean of Infatuation.

May you be ever possessed of valour ! It is the hero alone, not the coward, who has Liberation within his easy reach. Gird up your loins, ye heroes, for before you are your enemies—

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the dire army of Infatuation. It is undoubtedly true that "all great achievements are fraught with numerous impediments"; still you should exert your utmost for your end .....

Advance! Forward! O ye brave souls, to set free those that are in fetters, to lessen the burden of woe of the miserable, and to illumine the abysmal darkness of ignorant hearts. Look, how the Vedanta proclaims by beat of drums, "Be fearless!" May that solemn sound remove the heart's knot of all denizens of the earth.

O ye Hindus, de-hypnotise yourselves

Let us proclaim to every soul: उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत —"Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached." Arise, awake! Awake from this hypnotism of weakness. *None* is really weak; the soul is infinite, omnipotent, and omniscient. Stand up, assert yourself, proclaim the God within you, do not deny Him! Too much of inactivity, too much of weakness, too much of hypnotism, has been and is upon our race.

O ye modern Hindus, de-hypnotise yourselves. The way to do that is found in your own sacred books. Teach yourselves, teach everyone his real nature, call upon the sleeping soul and see how it awakes. Power will come, glory will come, goodness will come, purity will come, and everything that is excellent will come, when this sleeping soul is roused to self-conscious activity.

Rejuvenated glorious Bharat

I do not see into the future; nor do I care to see. But one vision I see clear as life before me, that the ancient Mother has awakened once more, sitting on Her throne—rejuvenated, more glorious than ever. Proclaim Her to all the world with the voice of peace and benediction.

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SWASTIK PRAKASHAN
27/1-B. CORNWALLIS STREET
CALCUTTA-6

RUPEES : TWO

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